MITHILA
ART AND ARCHITECTURE

VIJAYAKANTA MISHRA

182

MITHILA
ART AND ARCHITECTURE

MITHILA
ART AND ARCHITECTURE

VIJAYAKANTA MISHRA

with a foreword by

Prof. Kalyan K. Ganguli
Bagiswari Professor of Indian Art
and Head, Department of Ancient
Indian History & Culture,
University of Calcutta

MITHILA PRAKASANA
1, Sir P. C. Banerji Road,
Allahabad.

First Published 1978

Published by
Mithila Prakasana
1, Sir P. C. Banerji Road
Allahabad

Printed by
Color Imprints
179-B, Lloyds Road, Madras 600 014

CONTENTS

FOREWORD

MITHILA has been widely known as a great seat of culture from extremely ancient days. Its associations with Janaka, the celebrated saint-king of ancient Indian tradition have linked it with rise of culture in eastern India from a very remote age. Mithila's connection with Bengal have also been cherished by scholars and people here as exteremely close and brotherly. In recent times folk paintings from Mithila, having a commercial epithet, Madhubani paintings, have been brought to the view of discerning public as an art work of extremely rich content. Undoubtedly Mithila had promoted a very significant culture having made its debut in the field of art and architecture bearing characteristics of distinctive nature.

The effort made by Sri Vijayakanta Mishra, a distinguished product of the Mithila tradition to bring to light some of the artistic monuments of Mithila to the knowledge of interested public stand to deserve warm congratulation. It has been rightly pointed out by him that Mithila has so far remained utterly neglected as a field of investigation by scholars and archaeologists, though the tradition borne by it has been extremely rich and valuable. The land has stood throughout ages the deproductions of some of the extremely capricious and turbulant rivers as a consequence of which monuments had slender chance of surviving in this region. Further, the building material used had been primarily brick, as there had been no suitable supply of stone, and this also contributed to the withering of the monuments in course of time. The task undertaken here has

rather been a very difficult one. Still the effort has been well made. Much labour, sustained survey and deep devotion have been laid to bring about an estimate of the art and architecture of an area about which virtually nothing had been known.

I am sure the volume will be received with warmth by interested persons who will come to learn about a cultural tradition about which no visual elements had so far been heard. I wish that the work will get a wide circulation and will be read with pleasure.

21-12-1977

KALYAN K. GANGULI,
Bagiswary Professor of Indian Art
and Head, Department of Ancient
Indian History & Culture,
University of Calcutta

PREFACE

THE Author of this work is fully aware of the fact that he has undertaken a rather insurmountable task by attempting to write on the art and architecture of Mithila, a field which remained completely unexplored so far.

It would have been, perhaps, far more appropriate to call this volume "A FIRST ATTEMPT TO EXPLORE THE ART AND ARCHITECTURE OF MITHILA", which, in fact, it is. I have found no book, not even an article, that has attempted to deal with any temple or sculpture of this area, except a lone article on temples of Tirhut published in the Journal of Bihar and Orissa Research Society, Patna. It is therefore, with considerable diffidence that I attempt this work. Mithila has its own school of art and architecture. Uptill now none has surveyed the architecture, particularly temple architecture, of Mithila which was at its zenith during that period. This art tradition developed in the interior of the country. Hence an attempt has been made to describe in detail the sculptures which have been unearthed. None of these sculptures has been reproduced anywhere else. These contributions are due to the patronage of the Karnatas and Oinivaras who helped in its development. It has been attempted to survey, for the first time, quite exhaustively the temple architecture of Mithila in the light of the sculpture, literature and sundry other remains of antiquities and excavated materials. To understand this development, it is necessary to describe and demarcate the area and various names attached to different areas of Mithila and this

has been done in the beginning. I shall feel amply rewarded if this monograph is of some use to students, Art connoisseures and patrons of Indian Art and Culture, particularly scholars and lay men interested in the artistic and cultural heritage of Mithila.

It is my first and foremost duty to record my deep sense of gratitude to my father late Mahamahopadhyaya Dr. Umesha Mishra, who encouraged me to undertake this work. I am also under a deep debt of gratitude to the kindness and help of my brother Dr. Jayakanta Mishra, Professor of English, University of Allahabad. His keen interest in this work has enabled me to publish it earlier than expected. The responsibility of planning this volume and seeing it through the press has been, however mine. I must gratefully acknowledge the help and advice given by the scholars and for refering to their published works. I am also grateful to several of my friends whose help was invaluable, and also to the Archaeological Survey of India for permitting me to utilise some of their photographs. I am also grateful to Shri Loganathan, Photographer.

I offer my deep sense of gratitude to Prof. Kalyan K. Ganguli, Bagiswari Professor of Indian Art, and Head, Department of Ancient Indian History & Culture, University of Calcutta for his kind interest in the publication of this work and writing a foreword.

Without constant encouragement, advice and active help of my wife Vimala, this book could not have been produced in its present form. I am under deep obligation to her. Working harder than me were my sons Manikanta, Phanikantha, Vanikanta and Hemakanta and daughter Usha, always ready with references or a duster to wipe my table clean.

Finally, my thanks are due to Aswani, my 3 months old grand-son who loved to sit and play under my table while I prepared the Typescript.

22, February, 1978 VIJAYAKANTA MISHRA

ABBREVIATIONS

A.B.O.R.I.	Annals of the Bhandarkar Oriental Research Institute, Poona.
A.S.I.	Archaeological Survey of India, Annual Reports.
BAKHSI	Mithilabhasamaya Khandavalakula Itihasa by Mm. Mukunda Jha Bakhsi.
Bri.Ups.	Brihadaranyaka Upanisad.
Datt.Mim.	Dattaka Mimamsa.
Dist. Gaz.	District Gazeteers of India.
E.I.	Epigraphia Indica, Ootakamund.
I.A.	Indian Antiquary.
I.H.Q.	Indian Historical Quarterly, Calcutta.
J.R.A.S. (B)	Journal of Royal Asiatic Society, Bengal.
J.B. (O). R.S.	Journal of Bihar (and Orissa) Research Society, Patna.
Jayanti	Ramlocana Sarma Jubilee Volume, Pustaka Bhandara, Laberiasarai.
J.G.R.I.	Journal of the Ganganatha Jha Research Institute, Allahabad.
J.KAMARUPA	Journal of Kamarupa Anusandhana Samiti.
J.R.A.S.	Journal of Royal Asiatic Society, London.
K.N.P.	Kamsanarayanapadavali.
L.S.I.	Linguistic Survey of India.
MITHILANKA	Special Number, Mithilamihira 1935.
MIHIRA	MITHILA MIHIR, Darbhanga.
M.O.D.A.	Mithila Moda, Varanasi.
M.M.C.	Mithila MS Catalogue, Published by the Bihar Research Society, Patna.
M.S. or M.S.S.	Manuscripts.
O.D.B.L. or O.B.D.L.	Origin and Development of the Bengali Language by Dr. S.K. Chatterji.
RAYCHAUDHURY	Political History of Ancient India by Royachaudhary.

ANCIENT MITHILA, ITS BOUNDARY NAMES AND AREA

BOUNDARY

THIS is not strange that today on the political map of India we do not find the name of Mithila. Name of States and places have been changing from time to time due to political changes. Naturally, therefore a vagueness about its boundaries exists in many people's mind. It is an old name revived in recent times of a tract of country comprised by what is today indicated as 'North' Bihar, 'Terai' and 'Southern' portion of the kingdom of Nepal inclusive of lower ranges of hills. The name 'Mithila' had not been altogether forgotten though for administrative purpose first 'Tirabhukti' and then 'Tirhut' became the more common designation. Gradually now, however, the name Tirhut is giving way to the older and culturally richer name of 'Mithila'. It is also becoming more popular because of the increasing importance of Maithili, its mediaeval and modern regional language.

REFERENCES OF MITHILA

SATAPATHA BRAHMANA

The earlier reference to Videha is in the *Satapatha Brahmana*, the date of which has been roughly computed between 1000 and 600 B.C.[1] It is mentioned there that river *Sadanira* distinguished Mithila (then called

[1] Winternitz: *History of Indian Literature*, Vol. 1.

Videha) from Kosala. The identification of the river Sadanira has been made with the modern river Gandaki.[2]

EPICS

Even in the Epics the boundaries are not given with more exactitude. All that we know is that the country is known as Videha. It is described as having more than one kingdom within its boundaries. The important kingdoms mentioned are those of Vaisali and Mithila. It is not clear where the kingdom of Mithila ended and where that of Vaisali began, but it is stated in the Valmikiya *Ramayana* that 'they (the two kingdoms) were not far from the confluence of the river Sona and the Ganga', as Rama had finished his journey (between the Sona and the Ganga before reaching Vaisali) within a day only.[3] It took Visvamitra, along with Rama and Lakshmana, four days to reach the capital of the country of Videha from Ayodhya. They rested in the way for one night only[4].

BUDDHIST TEXTS

In the Buddhist texts there are one or two stray references which show that the province of Videha was situated in the tract of land called Madhyadesa. It is likely, as Dr. B.C. Law says that "the Buddhists extended the connotation of Madhyadesa *(traditionally regarded as the most sacred part of India)* simply because they had to include in it the land par excellence of Buddhism, viz., Bodhgaya and Banaras." It appears that they extended the 'eastern boundary of Majjhimadesa still farther to the east so as to include Pundravardhana which in ancient times included Varendra'[5] (North Bengal). Not only, the later Brahmanical and Muslim works agree in placing the boundary of Madhyadesa somewehre near Prayag, but also such early works as the *Aitareya Brahmana*[6] and the *Mahabharata*[7] hold the same view. It has been rightly contended that the reason, why *Yajnavalkya* Smriti is careful to

[2] This identification has been disputed. *Buddha:* Oldenberg p. 398n. cf. Pargiter : *JASB.*, 1897 p. 87ff. Pargiter takes the Sadanira to be identical with the Rapti. *Mahabharata* II.20.27 '*Gandakincha Mahasonam Sadaniram tathaiva cha*'.

[3] *Ramayana.*

[4] *Ramayana* 1,3. The messengers sent by Janaka reached Dasaratha's capital in three days by travelling very fast, while Dasaratha on his journey to the Videhan capital in his chariot took four days.

[5] B.C. Law (Italics is of the author. The second quotation is based on the Buddhist work *Divyavadana).*

[6] 38. 3.

[7] Pargiter : 'The *Nations of India at the battle between the Pandavas and Kauravas : JRAS*, 1908, p. 326, *Mahabharata Sa. Pa.* 167.3 *Madhyadesah.*

point out that the Path of Dharma was revealed by the sage of Mithila, Yajnavalkya, in that country in which the black antelope roams about,[8] is that though Mithila was not included in the four ancient holy lands of Bharatavarsa (Brahmavarta, Brahmarsidesa, Madhyadesa and Aryavarta) it acquired sanctity only from the fact pointed out by the Dharmasastra.[9] Indeed far from being included in the Madhyadesa (Mid-land), Mithila was consistently regarded as an independent unit of the Pracyadesa (Eastern country). In this connection it may be pointed out that Praci, in ancient Tibetan works, excluded (even Magadha, Kasi and Kosala) but included Mithila and Vaṅga.[10]

PURANAS

In the Puranas also we do not get a more definite idea of the boundaries of the province. In some of them, such as the *Vishnu, Bhagavata, Vayu, Skanda* there is hardly any clear mention of them. It is only in a later work, called *Brihad-Vishnu Purana* (*c.*5th Cen.A.D.), that we get an accurate idea. In its *Mithila-Mahatmya Khanda*, it is stated that Tirabhukti (a later name of the province) is situated between the river Ganga and the Himalayas, extending over fifteen rivers and the extension, from Kosi or Kausiki (in the east) to the Gandaki (in the west), for 24 yojanas and from Ganga to the forests of Himalayas for 16 yojanas.[11] The well-known poet of modern Mithila, Pandit Chanda Jha, describes this boundary in his well-known Maithili verses :

गंगा बहति जनिक दक्षिणदिशि पूर्व कौशकी धारा ।
पश्चिम बहति गंडकी उत्तर हिमवत बल विस्तारा ॥
कमला त्रियुगा अमृता धेमुडा वाग्मती कृतसारा ।
मध्य बहति लक्ष्मणा प्रभृति से मिथिला विद्यागारा ॥

[8] '*Mithilasthah sa yogindrah ksananam dhyatvabravinmunin* |
Yasmin dese mrigah krishnastasmin dharmat nibodhata ॥'
Yajnavalkya smriti. I.2.

[9] '*A History of Maithili Literature*' by Dr. J. K. Mishra, Vol. I, p. 3: *Apararka* p. 5 Quoted by Mm. P. V. Kane in *History of Dharmasastra*, Vol. II, Pt. I, p. 14.

[10] Though *Aitareya Brahmana* VIII. 14 includes Mithila in the ground of Pracyadesas and also Kosala, Magadha and Anga. *Indian Culture* Vol. I, pp. 421–23; VII 2.

[11]
गंगाहिमवतोर्मध्ये नदी पञ्चदशान्तरे ।
तैरभुक्तिरिति ख्यातो देशः परमपावनः ॥
कौशिकीन्तु समारभ्य गण्डकीमधिगम्य वै ।
योजनानि चतुर्विंशत् व्यायामः परिकीर्तितः ॥
गंगा प्रवाहमारभ्य यावद्धैमवतं वनम् ।
विस्तारः षोडशः प्रोक्तो देशस्य कुलनन्दन ॥

Besides this, there is an anonymous traditional verse quoted in the *Vidyakarasahasrakam* :[12]

जाता सा यत्र सीता सरिदमलजला वाग्मती यत्र पुण्या
यत्रास्ते सन्निधाने सुरनगरनदी भैरवो यत्रलिङ्गम् ।
मीमांसा-न्याय-वेदाध्ययन-पटुतरैः पण्डितैर्मण्डिताया
भूदेवो यत्र भूपो यजनवसुमती सास्ति मे तीरभुक्तिः ॥

This covers the modern districts of Muzaffarpur, Darbhanga, Madhubani Champaran, North Monghyr, North Bhagalpur (modern Saharsa Dist.) and parts of Purnea in India and those of Rohtara, Sarilahi, Mohitari, Saptari and Morang in the territory of Nepal.

This fixation of the boundaries of the ancient Mithila is the complete and the most accurate one that we have.

Obviously, there have been many changes in these boundaries since then. There is evidence to prove that the eastern boundary has never been constant. It has been fluctuating with the variations in the course of the river Kosi from time to time.[13] The Kosi formerly was flowing very much to the east of its present position. But from about the seventh century A.D. to about 1600 A.D.,

[12] Verse. p. 147. Dr. U. Mishra's edition

[13] The references in the epics are too vague to enable us to ascertain the exact position of the source of the river. As far as I can follow Dr. Hunter, the original course of the river as suggested by him agrees in the main with that indicated by Dr. Hamilton as far as Tejpur Pargana, but from this point the former takes it along a more northern course into the Karatoya, whilst the latter takes it further south into the marshes north and east of Malda station and thence away to the Brahmaputra. Dr. Hunter's theory seems more convincing of the two as being based on some evidence and these 'great lakes north and south and east of Malda were probably formed by a subsequent movement of the Kosi'. The second bed of the Kosi and probably some other channels occupied between this and the hypothetical course, suggested by Dr Hunter, is supported by the evidence of the distinctive Bengali and Bihari *eras* while the line of division at the time of introduction would most probably be carried along a natural boundary such as a large river. There are along this tract of country, numerous large jhils or extensive pools which seem to be the outcome of a large river. This Kosi would pass through Kalindri, a deep and wide channel still known as Mora Kosi, and would strike direct against the northern suburbs of Gaur, and we find numerous embankments to the north and east of this ancient city meant to keep off the floods, 'The Kosi has never been known to return, eastwards to any of its deserted channels but has been steadily advancing westward, the successive leaps forming as it were a series of terraces with the slope facing east'. Purnea Dist. Gazetteer. p. 19ff.

as the common boundary of the provinces of Mithila and Kamrup (Assam)[14] the Ganga and the Himalayas have remained more or less constant as indicated by the boundary given in the *Trikandaseshakosha*,[15] *Saktisangamatantra* and the traditional definition of the grant of the kingdom of Mithila to Maharaja Mahesa Thakura by the Mughal Emperor Akbar.[16] As regards the Gandaki also there has been some change. Grierson noticed this in 1880 and found as much of Mithila as laid in the District of Champaran had gradually, linguistically and culturally been encroached upon by Madhyadesa. Indeed, linguistically speaking he noticed that Madhesi (Madhyadesiya) language had occupied almost the whole of Champaran and portions of Muzaffarpur. He says, that the language of ancient Mithila has been encroached upon in recent past by Bhojpuri in the west and it has in revenge crossed the Ganges and occupied North Patna and so much of Monghyr and Bhagalpur Districts as lie to the south of that river. It has also crossed the Kosi and occupied Purnea.[17]

VARIOUS NAMES OF MITHILA

The *Brhad-Vishnu Purana* gives the following twelve names of Mithila :[18]

मिथिला तैरभुक्तिश्च वैदेही नैमिकाननम् ।
ज्ञानक्षेत्रं कृपापीठं स्वर्णलाङ्गलपद्धति ॥
जानकीजन्मभूमिश्च निरपेक्षा विकल्मषा ।
रामानन्दकुटी विश्वभावनी नित्यमंगला ॥

14 गङ्गातीरावधिरधिगता यद्भवो भृङ्गभुक्तिः ।
नाम्ना सैव त्रिभुवनतले विश्रुता तीरभुक्तिः ॥

15 In the *Trikandaseshakosha* of Purushottamadeva –

गण्डकीतीरमारभ्य चम्पारण्यान्तकं शिवे ।
विदेहभूः समाख्याता तीरभुक्ताभिधौ मनुः ॥

(Baroda Edition Vol. I Intro. VLI).

16 'Az-gang-ta-sang; Az-kos-to-ghose' i.e. from the Gangas to the mountains (i.e. Nepal) and from Kosi (river Kosi) to the whole of Tirhut as popularly known. cf. *Ain-i-Akbari*.

17 Grierson; *Bihari Grammars*, Introduction p. XVI.

18 *Brihad-Vishnu Purana* Mithilakhanda : *Mithila : Tirabhukti; Vaidehi; Naimikananam*- the forest associated with the descendants of Nimi; *Jnanakshetram, Kripa-pitham*- the home of knowledge and the centre of grace ; *Svarnalangalapaddhati* – The footsteps of the gold plough ; *Janaki – janmabbumi; Vikalmasha* – Devoid of sins ; *Ramanandakuti* – the cottage of Sita's pleasure ; *Visvabhavani* – world pleasant ; and *Nityamangala* – ever blissful.

Most of these names are descriptive epithets. We shall therefore, discuss the origin of the first three names only because they alone seem to have been actually used as the proper names of the entire country.

At first it seems that the whole province was called Videha and had several kingdoms in it, the chief ones being those of Mithila and Vaisali.[28a] Indeed, from the account of the land given in earlier literature it would seem that the chief city of the kingdom of Mithila, was Mithila. The name Videha appears to have lost vogue in the mediaeval times and today it is obsolete.

Then came the name *Tirabhukti*. This name appears to have become popular by the 4th and 5th centuries A.D. It was a contemporary name with the names of the contemporary provinces of Jejakabhukti (Bundelkhand), Pundravardhanabhukti and other Bhuktis. The Basarh terracotta seals of the 4th century A.D. mention this name definitely for the first time. It became very popular and in its simplified form Tirhut is even now used extensively, though, as pointed out earlier, the name Mithila is now gradually gaining the ground. Tirhut also indicated at one time a Sirkar or a division of the Subah of Bihar, under Muslim rulers; 'it comprised of a very large tract of the country being bounded on the north by Sirkar Hajjipur .... Then the Britishers formed the modern division of Tirhut comprising of Districts of Muzaffarpur, Darbhanga, Champaran and Saran.' The name Mithila is found very early in the Epics and the Puranas. But it is not clear when exactly its connotation passed from the bounds of a city to those of the province. It was certainly used for the whole country during the middle ages. It has become most popular and symbolic of the renaissance Mithila in the late 19th century A.D. Indeed today this is the name which is known more widely as a cultural unit than any other.

(1) VIDEHA

Videha[29] was the earliest designation. It is probable that it was derived from the name of the Vedic king Videgha Mathava who is said to have introduced the Agni (? sacrificial fire, representing according to some the Aryan or Brahmanical civilization of Madhyadesa; according to others only a particular

[28a] cf. Y. Mishra: *An Early History of Vaisali*, Chapter I·

[29] *Darbhanga Dist. Gazetteer* – 'Videha comprised the country from Gorakhpur on the Rapti to Darbhanga, with Kosala on the west and Anga on the east. On the north it approached the hills, and on the south it was bounded by the small kingdom of Vaisali'.

form of sacrifice) into the lands beyond the river Sadanira.[20] At any rate it seems that Videgha Mathava's visit led to the cultivation and more habitation of the country, for we are told that previously the land was extremely marshy and had to be dried up.[21] It appears also that he became the founder of the dynasty of Janaka kings; his name gave the name Videha or Videhan to it.

Other explanations of this name are not so convincing. Buddhaghosha in his Commentary on the *Samyutta Nikaya* resolves the word 'Vedehi' into 'Veda-iha', 'Vedana-ihati' or intellectual effort. Some explain it by referring to Vaidehya, Vaidehi and Vaideha in the *Taittiriya Brahmana*[22] and Kathaka *Samnhitas*[23] - though they mean cows and not any country. There is a third theory very popular among the Pauranics that the name Videha is derived from a king called Nimi who became a Videha (one whose body has gone bodiless) and whose successors were called Vaideha. (The story given in the Puranas and the Ramayana is described below). Now the entire story appears to be more of a nature of myth rather than of a historical fact. The churning of a dead body and birth of a son therefrom and the connected origin of names - Videha, Mithila and Janaka are typical of this kind of myth originating at a very later date. Mr. Shyamnarain Singh compares this kind of story to those explaining the existing names of Hellen and his sons in ancient Greece.[24]

According to the Jaina Sutras,[25] Vardhamana Mahavira, a Videha, the son of Videhadatta, a native of Videha, a prince of Videha lived 30 years in Videha, when his parents died. At the same time of Gautama Buddha we find people coming from Sravasti to Videha to see their wares.[26] In the *Vayu*[27] and

[20] *Satapatha Brahmana* says '*Janako ha Vaideho*' IX.6.2.51.5.i.etc; Oldenberg: *Buddha* pp. 214–15: *Vedic Index* II, p. 278, Some scholars are inclined to find the origin of the name Mithila too in the title Mathava of this king, Mithi being reminiscent of it.

[21] *Sat. Bra. IV. I.*

[22] II.i.iv.

[23] इन्द्रो वै वृत्रमहस्तं हतस्सप्तभिर्भोगैः
पर्यहंस्तस्य मूर्ध्नो वैदेहीरुदायंस्ताः
प्राचीरायंस्तस्मात्ताः पुरस्स जघन्यमृषभं
वैदेहमनूयान्तममन्यतेममिदानीमालभेय
तेन त्वा इतो मुच्येयेति......(XIII. 4).

[24] Cf. *The Greek legend of Hellen and his Sons.*

[25] *Jaina Sutras, Sacred Books of the East*, XXII. Pt. p. 256.

[26] See Dhammapala's *Paramatthadipani* on the *Theragatha*, Pt. III pp. 277 ff.

[27] 88.7–8.

Vishnu[28] *Puranas* Nimni or Nemi figures as a son of Ikshavaku and is honoured with the epithet of Videha.

In the *Gilgit* Manuscripts[29] Khanda is the Prime Minister of an unnamed king of Videha (Videharaja). Khanda became very powerful. The other courtiers of the king did not like him and they conspired against him, as a result of which he went to Vaisali which was a *gana*. Thus from these manuscripts, we come to know that in the sixth century B.C. Videha was a monarchy like Kosala and Magadha and unlike Vaisali.

There was very close association of Mahavira with Videha as according to some Jain scholars Vaisali or Kundapura formed a part of the Videha country as shown below :

(1) Mahavira was born at Kundapura or Kundagrama which was situated in Videha or in the river-country (i.e., Tirabhukti),

(2) He was called Videha, Videhadatta (given by Videha), Videhajatya (born in Videha) and Videhasukumara (a good son of Videha) Ref. *Kalpa Sutra,* Sutra No. 110,

(3) He passed thirty years of his early life in Videha before the renunciation of the world,

(4) His mother, Trisala Kshatriyani was the sister of Chetaka, the Lichchhavi chief of Vaisali as is called Videhadatta which means that Vaisali lay in Videha.

(2) MITHILA

Mithila is not mentioned in the Vaidika or even later Vaidika literature. The *Ramayana* and the *Mahabharata, Dasakumaracharita, Raghuvamsa, Prasannaraghava* etc., sparingly mention it for the whole country. But it is used most extensively in literature specially as the capital city of Videha or Tirabhukti province situated somewhere in the Terai (identified with modern Janakpur).[29a] Mithila is also called Hiyulu in the Buddhist Annals.[30]

[28] iv S-1.

[29] *Gilgit Manuscripts* Vol. III Pt. II pp. 3-5.

[29a] The full story of the discovery of Janakpur is described in *Jha Commemoration Volume*, pp. 385 ff. In some Jataka accounts a city called Jayanta on the bank of the Ganges is spoken of as the capital of Videha (or of a Videhan District?) The *Devi-Bhagavata* (Skandha 6) wrongly located the city on the bank of the Ganga.

[30] See Spence Hardy's *Manual of Buddhism*, p. 196 quoted by Mandalal Dey in *Geographical Dictionary of Ancient and Mediaeval India*, 1927, p. 13.

The use of the appellation Mithila for the whole country is comparatively very late - from about the time of the installation of Karnata Dynasty[31] in 1097 A.D. and was used side by side with Tirabhukti or Tirhut till the last century. Since Grierson made the name Maithili popular for the Vernacular literature and the land, the name Mithila once again became famous and popular.

As regards the origin of the name, the Valmikiya *Ramayana* observes that the city of Mithila was founded by king Mithi. This is corroborated by many puranas-*Bhagavata,*[32] *Vayu,*[33] *Bhavishya Brahma*[34] and *Brihad-Vishnu Purana*[35], *Mithila Mahatmya.*[36] It is related that king Nimi Videha, once started a sacrifice without consulting his family priest Vasistha who had gone to Indra. Thereupon, he was cursed by the latter: "King Nimi will be bodiless (i.e., will die, videha vi - vigata deha) in as much as he, having rejecting me, has engaged Gautama".[37] The king died and his dead body was churned by the

[31] See the work of king Nanyadeva on music-*Sarasvatihridayakanthabharana.*

[32] IX, 24, 64 and IX, 12.

[33]

नेमिर्नाम सुधर्मात्मा सर्वसत्वनमस्कृतः।
आसीत् पुत्रो महाराज्ञः इक्ष्वाकोर्भूरितेजसः ॥ ३ ॥
स शापेन वशिष्ठस्य विदेहः समपद्यत।
तस्य पुत्रो मिथिर्नाम जनितः पर्वभिस्त्रिभिः।
अरण्यां मथ्यमानायां प्रादुर्भूतो महायशाः।
नाम्ना मिथिरिति ख्यातो जननाज्जनकोऽभवत् ॥ ५ ॥
मिथिर्नाम महावीर्य्यो येनासौ मिथिलाऽभवत्।
राजासौ जनको नाम जनकाच्चाप्यदावसुः ॥ ६ ॥
— वायु पुराण ८८.३-६

सदुश्चरं नाम तपो येन तप्तं महत्पुरा।
त्रीणि वर्षसहस्राणि दिव्यानीति हि नः श्रुतम् ॥ ३ ॥
तस्योर्ध्वरेतसस्तत्र स्थितस्यानिमिषस्पृहा।
सोमत्वतनुरापेदे महाबुद्धिः स वै द्विजः ॥ ४ ॥

[34] III.64.

[35] 86.6.

[36] p.9 Adh. 18, Sloka, 6 ff.

[37] The name Gautama is significant. It seems to be a family name decended from Rahuganna Gautama of the Vedic period, who first brought sacrificial fire to Mithila along with his patron Videgha Mathava. The reference to the priest Gautama in this story – which is certainly later than that about Videgha Mathava in the Brahmana period– further makes it likely that the name Videha was not derived from 'Mithi' becoming Videha, though we have it from *Srimad Bhagavata.*

Risis[38] to get a successor who came to be known as Mithi (lit. product of churning). This Mithi is said to have given us the name Mithila.[39]

The most reasonable explanation of the origin of the name appears to be as given by the *Unadi-sutras*.[40] Its author derives it from 'mantha' (to churn), and thus explains it :

मिथिलादयश्च ॥ मथ्यन्तेऽत्र रिपवो मिथिलानगरी

(that city is called Mithila where enemies are tormented). Dr. Subhadra Jha rejects it 'as merely conjectural' in his introduction to the 'Formation of Maithili language'. But as Sir Sita Ram rightly observes : this 'explanation is more reasonable. Nimi, a son of Ikshvaku, was the founder of the solar line of kings of Ayodhya. One of his brothers established himself in Visala and founded the kingdom of Vaisali. Another went to Mithila giving to his capital a signification cognate to Ayodhya ("that which cannot be conquered")[41]

Mithila was the name of a sage and it is possible that he may have some connection with the name

("मिथिलाश्च महातेजाः"—मत्स्य पुराण)

But there is no mention of the sage elsewhere, so it appears to be somebody's imaginary or poetic invention.

[38] गौतमो याज्ञवल्क्यश्च विश्वामित्रो भृगुस्तथा ॥
वामदेवोषित: कण्वश्चागस्त्यो भार्गवस्तथा...
शारीरम् मन्थनार्थाय सर्वे तत्र समागता: ।

See also *JBRS*, XXXVII, Pts. 3–4 Law B.C.: *Some Kshatriya Tribes* p. 35 JHA Commemoration Volume pp. 377–79.

[39] Singh. S., rightly characterises this story as belonging to that class of stories which are created in order to explain existing names and compares it to similar Greek legends. All the names (Janaka, Videha, Mithila) important in early history of the land are sought to be explained by the same story.

[40] 1.57.

[41] G. Jha Commemoration Volume, p. 378. The *Sabda Kalpadruma*, Vol. III, p. 723 says :

मथ्यन्ते शत्रवो यस्यां मथ मिथिलादयश्च उण् ॥ ५८ ॥
इति इलक् अकारस्येत्वं निपात्यते स्वनामख्याते नगरी ।
सातु जनकराजपुरी । यथा विदेहा मिथिला प्रोक्ता ।
इति हलायुधः ।

Dr. Subhadra Jha conjectures the meaning of the word thus: "It is not unreasonable to think that Mithila has some connection with Sanskrit *Mitha* together. Hence, Mithila may mean "attached together", in asmuch as Mithila is the name of that part of the country which is made up of not less than three ancient provinces ; viz., "Vaisali, Videha and Anga". This is not, however, at all correct. For this would not explain the name as applied to a city.

The grammatical sense appears to be the most suitable. It is clear however, that in course of time the name of the capital city came to be used for the whole kingdom.[42]

It is said in the *Mahabharata*, Sabhaparva[43] that Arjuna, Krishna and Bhima started from the Kuru kingdom and reached Mithila after crossing Purva Kosala. In the Vanaparva[44] it is said that Karna conquered Mithila during his Digvijaya. In the Sabhaparva[45] it is said that Krishna together with Bhimasena, and Arjuna visited Mithila on his way from Indraprastha to Rajagraha.

We gather from the *Bhagavatapurana*[46] the story of the founding of Mithila. According to the *Mahagovinda Suttanta*[47] of the *Digha* Nikaya, Mithila was built by Govinda. In the Jaina Sutras[48] we get that Vardhamana Mahavira stayed in Mithila for five years. It is stated in the Jatakas[49] that the city of Mithila was 7 leagues and the kingdom of Videha 300 leagues in extent. In the *Si-yu-ki* (Buddhist records of the Western World), we find that the Chinese traveller Hiuen Tsang, describing the kingdom of Fo-li-shi (vrijri) says

[42] According to the *Bhavishya Purana*, Nimi the son of Manu, king of Ayodhya frequented the land of sacrifices. His son Mithi founded a kingdom here which was named Mithila after his name. Being a 'city builder', he came to be known as 'Janaka'.

निमि पुत्रस्तु तथैव मिथिर्नाम महान्
स्मृतः प्रथमं भुजबले येन येहुतस्य
पार्श्वतः निर्मितम् स्वीयनाम्ना च
मिथिलापुरमुत्तमम् ।

[43] *Mahabharata*, Sabhaparva, Chapter 25, p. 24.

[44] *Vanaparva* 254.

[45] Sabhaparva XX.

[46] IX, 24, 64, IX, 13.13.

[47] *P.T.So* Vol. II. p. 235.

[48] Jaina Sutras *S. B. B.*, XXII. Pt. I, p. 256.

[49] Jataka (Fausboll) Vol. III p. 365 and II.39.

that the capital of the country was Chen-shu-na. Beal quotes V. de st. Martin who connects the name Chen-shu-na with Janaka and Janakpur (= Mithila). According to the Jatakas[50] Mithila was 60 yojanas from Champa which was situated on the right bank of the Ganga.[51]

(3) TIRABHUKTI

Tirabhukti or Tirhut seems to have been the designation of the whole or of even a little larger part of the country called Videha, though actually, Tirabhukti seems to have implied practically nothing more than Mithila and Vaisali kingdoms of older days. It is mentioned in *Linga Purana*[52], *Bhavishya Purana*, *Brihad Vishnu Purana*, Vamana's *Linganusasana* and *Saktisangama-tantra*[53] only. The earliest datable mention of it is first found in the seals of *Basarh*[54] (Vaisali, Distt.). Thereafter, the *Trikandaseshakosha*[55] (10th cen. or 11th cen. A.D.) and various works refer to it.

As regards the meaning of the name, various conjectures have been made. Mr. Haraprasad Sastri held that the term refers to the province bordering the Ganga and that as the word 'bhukti' is often used in the Sena inscriptions in the sense of province during tenth, eleventh and twelfth centuries, it was first used when the Sena kings of Bengal conquered the country and settled a number of Bengali Brahmans in it. It is true that the word 'Bhukti' meant province, but the discovery of Basarh seals dating back to the fourth century A.D. falsifies the latter half of this statement.

[50] *Jataka* VI. p.32.

[51] There is a reférence in the *Kalpasutra* that Lord Mahavira stayed for 6 rainy seasons in Mithila (5.123).

[52] 'तीरभुक्ति प्रदेशे तु हलावर्त्ते हलेश्वरः' ।

[53] गण्डकीतीरमारभ्य चम्पारण्यान्तकं शिवे ।
विदेहभूः समाख्याता तीरभुक्ताभिधो मनुः ॥

[54] 'Tirabhukta-uparik adhikaranasya, Tira-Kumaraumatya-adhikarana (Sya)' Arch. Survey, India, Annual Report 1903–04, p.109.

[55] 'प्राग्ज्योतिषः कामरुपे तीरभुक्तिस्तु लिच्छविः'

p.59. Purushottamadeva, the author was born between 10th and 11th cen. A.D.

The significance of 'Tira' is disputed. Shri S. Singh[56] holds that 'Tira' refers to a caste called 'Tivara' (Dhivara?) after whom the country might have been called Tirabhukti. Tira is not an important caste in Mithila. The *Varna-ratnakara* has not mentioned it. Then he says the word 'Tira' may refer to some locality called 'Tira'. A more probable explanation is however that of Gangananda, the author of *Baringaduta* wherein he says that Tirabhukti is so called because it 'extends to Tira (bank) of the river Ganges'. It appears that in Mithila the river banks are too many. They are both a curse and a blessing to the country. The most plausible explanation therefore seems to be that Tirabhukti was so called because 'it was the land of river banks'.

There is also another explanation. Tirabhukti is so called because it is regarded as a land of three mythical sacrifices performed at the birth place of Sita, at Danusa and at Janakpur. Other explanation is that because it extends up to the Tira or the bank of the Ganga, so it is called Tirabhukti, which is supported by the fact that originally the inhabitants of this tract of land of the country lived on the two sides of the river Kausiki (the Kosi). This fact is even today divided into two broad groups - Pachavari and Puvari para.

Some other meaning or derivations of the name have been offered but they are more ingenious than historically true. Thus 'Tirhut' is a corruption of Trhutam i.e., the country of three sacrifices (i) the sacrifice at the birth place of Janaki, (ii) the sacrifices at the breaking of Siva's bow by Rama in the Dahanusa Yajna, and (iii) the sacrifice in honour of the marriage of Rama and Sita at Janakpur. Some other attempts to trace in it the name of a province bounded by three rivers - the Ganga, Kosi and Gandaki have also been suggested. This view ignores the historical fact that the centre of the ancient Mithila was the portion which was nearer to the Himalaya and Nepal.

AREA OF MITHILA

The dimensions of Mithila as given in the *Brihad-Vishnu Purana*[67] are : East to West 96 Kosas or 24 Yojanas, North to South 64 Kosas or

[56] *History of Tirhut*, p.5.

[67] कौशिकीन्तु समारभ्य गण्डकीमधिगम्य वै ।
योजनानि चतुर्बिंशद्व्यायामः परिकीर्तितः ॥
गंगा प्रवाहमारभ्य यावद्धैमवतं वनम् ।
विस्तारः षोडश प्रोक्तो देशस्य कुरुनन्दन ॥
मिथिला नाम नगरी तत्रास्ते लोकविश्रुता ॥

16 Yojanas. 6,144 sq. Kosas (=about 1255 sq. miles) and, in the Mahajanaka Jataka as 300 Yojanas = (1200 miles).

The actual area of modern Mithila on the basis of census report of 1941 is roughly 19,275 sq. miles in India including the modern Districts of Madhubani, Darbhanga, Samashipur, Vaisali, Muzaffarpur, Champaran, Monghyr, Saharsa and Purnea and about 10,000 sq. miles in the kingdoms of Nepal.

It is interesting to compare these figures with those for the area of

1. Modern Tirhut Division = 12,595 sq. miles. (before the creation of new Districts)
2. Grierson's Maithili speaking area excluding Champaran = 30,000 sq. miles
3. Dr. Umesha Mishra's Maithili speaking area (excluding Champaran and including Magahi area) = 40,000 sq. miles

MITHILA ART AND ARCHITECTURE

MITHILA has a long, rich and glorious history and tradition dating from the earliest recorded time. In early works written by Maithila scholars no traces of art and architecture have been found but in the later classics there are description of places, temples as well as of deities worshipped in them and of the ardour of their devotees. Though their builders seem to have had a knowledge of some of the Agamas and Silpa-sastras, the structures were made of perishable materials such as bamboos or wood having long grass as their roofs and hence hardly any of the earlier structures appears to have survived.

The whole of Mithila is a fertile alluvial plain. The river system played an important part in shaping the destiny of this area. It made and unmade the physical features of this low area mostly of alluvial plain by frequently shifting its courses, carrying vast deposit of silt from upland and thus creating enormous deltaic low lands.

Thus constant shifting of river beds played probably a vital part to make large cities and towns with beautiful temples and buildings flourish.

The sweeping destructive forces at these rivers particularly the Kosi, the Balan and the Kamla are well known. The floods of Kosi and Balan are probably responsible for the ruin of great cities of Bhit Bhagwanpur, Kandaha, Andhara Tharhi etc.

None of the earlier monuments exist and the only memorials of ancient times consist

of jungle-clad mound scattered over Mithila. A few stray temples belonging to late period, fortunately escaped the natural calamities. The reason for this total obliteration may be sought for only in the soft alluvial formation of land and its damp climate but also the building materials such as mud, bamboo, reeds, wood and such other fragile but indigenous products. The usual medium of building construction was brick, which is a much less durable material than stone, which is not available in this flat plain area. It is also a fact that brick structures cannot be expected to resist for long the effects of damp and relaxing climate, the excessive rainfall and the luxuriant vegetation of the country. Besides, very little exploration has been done in the area, which is due to yearly floods. It should also be kept in mind that the little knowledge that we possess relates almost to religious buildings and very little to other secular architecture.

Of the districts of Mithila as stated in earlier chapter, the districts of Vaisali and Champaran have yielded enumerable antiquities right from the Pre-Christian era. The earliest notable historical monuments reported are those of Mauryan pillar with capital found at Basarbakhira at Vaisali and Lauriyanandangarah and Lauriya Araraj at Champaran and the remains of huge stupa discovered in 1955 by Professor Altekar and in 1974 by the author near Basarbakhira pillar. Besides, a large number of terracottas belonging to Mauryan, Sunga and Kushana periods including coins, potsherds are also discovered both from Vaisali and at Chachar near Hajipur. The mediaeval sculptures of the Pala age also reported from the area and now housed in the Archaeological Museum, Vaisali and in recently constructed Museum at Chachar near Hajipur. But an endeavour is made by the author of the present monograph to concentrate only on the art and architectural heritage of three important districts viz., Darbhanga, Samastipur and Madhubani, as these districts remain neglected and unexplored till now.

A large number of Temples were constructed in stone or brick in Mithila in later periods, but except a few structures belonging to the Karnata Dynasty, they have all perished, leaving no trace behind. In Mithila no temples of great antiquity exist but by a close study and analysis about their general features from several stone reliefs, for, in many cases the deity is shown as installed in temples where outlines are carved round the figure (eg., doorjambs from Bhit Bhagwanpur, District Madhubani) belonged to the northern style of Indian architecture.

After eleventh century Karnata and Oiniwara dynasties established as the dominant political power in Mithila. A new religion and a new culture, alien in temperament as well as in spirit was confronted with it. The artists, builders or craftsmen were all indigenous. They did not accompany the victorious Karnata armies in Mithila. The difficulty of obtaining stone, it is said, in the flat plain of Mithila and the consequent wholesale dependence on brick for construction for a more permanent kind resulted in the evolution of distinct forms and idioms, some of which might have existed in the earlier period. There were certain temples in which stone was profusely used atleast on the doorway. Some of the earlier brick temples might have been rebuilt of stone. The brick temples were the single domed square type with differences in necks. The weak and fragile nature of the material was responsible for the low elevation of the buildings, the comparative insignificance of the arches and the smallness of the domes. The dome with prominent neck to constricted necks was assembled in concentric courses of flat bricks, gradually diminishing in circumference one above the other, until at the top it was spanned by a single brick or stone slab. Brick, it is said, was also responsible probably for the projected pendentives at the corners used for the support of the circular dome over a quadrangular space. Of the Hindu temples erected during this period very few remain.

During the mediaeval period a number of temples have been built in Mithila. A few temples are in existence here and there from which we can have a glimpse of the temple architecture. But there are several loose sculptures scattered all over this region which can throw some light on this art. Some of these sculptures kept in the temples are in religious use. They throw light on the culture of Mithila particularly the faith of the common folk. Just like Bengal, in mediaeval Mithila also the temples and sculpture were made for *dharmartha.* Sculptures of common Hindu and Buddhist gods and goddesses were immortal. In the field of religion people of Mithila were having a heavenly pleasure and for self religion people never hesitated in spending any amount in constructing a temple or sculpture for worship. Sculptors were conversant in making idols of the present day and common conventional Maithila culture. Till this day we have not found any inscription or any other documentary evidence about the life of these artists, but it appears that like other regions Mithila was not lacking master artisans. Some scholars believed that they were mostly from the backward class.

Many parts of India have excelled remarkably in the field of art and architecture and immense studies were made on them but no regular study has

been made to this north-eastern part of India particularly to Mithila and remained neglected though it has an individual cultural heritage. Mithila has made important contribution in literature, in religious and philosophical speculations. Hence it would be an useful study to investigate whether this region has contributed any significant achievement in art particularly in temple building architecture. There are no references in earlier literature on Mithila art and architecture. Hence it is generally concluded thaı Mithila has no significant contribution in this particular sphere. There are no ancient monuments particularly of Pre-Karnata period in good condition. This may be due to natural calamities or political upheavals in this part of the country in early period. A few isolated temples found scattered throughout the entire territory and standing in various stages of decay in the northern part of Mithila consist of jungle clad mounds high and low. In the past no regular exploration has been done in this region. Annual floods and other natural calamities are some of the reasons for not finding early structures. Maithilas who are mainly Saivite and worship Siva might have a common Siva idol kept in a thatched house practically on the outskirts of every important villages. Nothing can be said definitely about the nature of the monuments lying buried within the above stated mounds, unless until proper scientific investigations are undertaken. Thus we find that the scope of study of ancient Maithila architecture is handicapped not because of the paucity of standing monuments but also by lack of proper scientific explorations and investigations of their remains that lie buried beneath their own debris. This is the condition not only of Mithila but also to other eastern regions. After the 15th century we have records of temple architecture mostly influenced by Indo-Islamic art. It will not be out of place to say that majority of them now survive in the dilapidated condition or over-grown with tropical vegetation. Hence it will not be wrong to say that scholars of Mithila architecture have very little material to work upon.

In Sanskrit and Maithili literary works like *Varnaratnakara* of Jyotireswara, *Kirtilata* of Vidyapati etc., we find descriptions of building architecture during the time of the Karnata and Oiniwara dynasties of Mithila. These literary works are immensely helpful to Maithila architect in rebuilding the forms and features of some of the interesting art and architecturel types that had been characteristic of this part of the Indian continent. The Karnata kings felt a necessity of erecting monuments and buildings and also palaces, *dyuta-griha* in different public places in their kingdoms. Stone was the main material in early phase but in later phase brick with stone or purely brick was commonly used. It is already known that stone is not easily available in this region.

Hence the builders must have preferred brick walls with thatched roofs in the beginning and later might have turned to brick roofing. In this flat alluvial plain, lack of stone might have encouraged the builders largely to depend on such indigenous products as mud, bamboo, reed, straw, wood etc. It is certain that such fragile articles cannot be durable. Besides, the whole region is marshy and there are a number of small rivulets. The rich alluvial clay furnishes a convenient and easily available medium for the fashioning of the bricks. It may be observed that when this clay-brick is fired, it assumes a rich red texture and burnt clay bricks of glowing red colour formed the common and frequently used material for buildings that were intended to be more permanent. The mortar which was used in early phase of these buildings were of simple mud. And in the later phases a mixture of lime and surkhi (brick and its crushed powder) replaced it. Stone has been used very rarely but occasionally door jambs, pillars etc., of some of the temples were found made of stone (cf. Bhit Bhagwanpur door jambs). So far no stone temple of early phase survive intact in Mithila. So the Mithila temples are essentially in brick and it is a well recognised fact that this material cannot be compared and contrasted with the immence scope and possibilities had in hard and immutable stone. But at the same it me it should be kept in mind that Maithila genius of Maithila builders did not stand in the way of their inventions in producing beautiful artistic forms from bamboo, reed, straw, mud, wood etc., and still are the commonest material in Mithila in building houses, mandapas temples etc. Thus in a region like Mithila it is very difficult to build any edifices in grand and impressive scale with such fragile material, where natural calamities like flood, earthquake etc., are very common. When the people of this region felt to have buildings of permanent nature for religious or secular purposes they adopted bricks. The devotion of the Maithilas submerged themselves towards gods and goddesses as their near and dear relations and so they had to build these temples from the same materials which they used in their houses.

The indigenous building styles, especially in the temples are based on its traditional wooden houses with thatched roof. Clay is easily available from deltaic region so brick is extensively used. Sometimes probably these bricks are also carved for the ornamentation of the exterior walls of the temples. But so far we have not come across any specimen of such temple. The traditional bamboo and thatched herds of the poor dwellers fixed and echo in the pointed arches, the sloping roofs and the curved caves. Generally these temples are dedicated to Siva, Vishnu or to Suryanarayana. The Saiva temples had generally the sloping roofs, truncated at the top. In the latter temples towers

are often erected on the curvilinear roof. The facades of the later Mithila temples had generally two or three arched entrances. (cf. Navaratna Temple at Mangarauni). The ekacharis are temples unlike those of Orissa but like thatched huts. These temples of Mithila do not illustrate a development over a long period of time, they were all erected within the relatively narrow interval of 250 years or so. During Pala and Sena periods, black basalt was used for building and sandstone pillars were also used in the later periods decorated with floral designs and other motifs, the remnants of which have been reported from different parts of Mithila.

FACTORS RESPONSIBLE FOR ERECTION OF TEMPLE BUILDING ACTIVITIES

What were the factors which inspired temple building activities in Mithila? The main purpose of temple erection was to attain high religious merit both for the builder as well as for his parents. This is the tradition practiced all over India both by the Hindus and the Buddhists and continued even upto the present time. We have not found any inscriptions of the earlier days but it appears that at the same time they were also built even without personal interest. The later temples of Dharbhanga Raj family were constructed as memorial temples over the dead bodies of Maharajas, Maharanis and Nobles. After the cremation, a few pieces of bones used to be deposited near the rivers and a temple used to be built on the spot and arrangements were made for daily worship. In later periods most of the temples are of the hut - type in which they install a Linga.

The rise of the Pala empire in Bengal and Bihar gave a great impetus to art in these provinces which caused great improvement in the plastic art of the country. Besides, throughout the length of the dominion of the Palas i.e., Bengal, Bihar and part of U.P. images of the various forms of Vishnu have been found in very large numbers. In fact they out-number any other class of images that have been found. It may be said with confidence that the representations of the standing four armed Vishnu and the phallic emblem of Siva were more popular than any other form, whether of the orthodox or of the heterodox pantheons. It may further be stated that a majority of the forms of Vishnu are representations of Vasudeva holding a mace in the upper right hand and a lotus in the lower, while the upper left hand holds the wheel and the lower one the conch. These images prove the fact that many temples were there in the past, within which they were installed. But though the temples were completely destroyed or buried, but these images inspired the devout Maithilas to construct new temples which they recovered occassionally from the oblivion.

TEMPLE TYPES :

Due to accute paucity of ancient structural remains and due to natural calamity like flood, earthquake etc., it is a difficult task to reconstruct an account of early temple types of Mithila. The literary references, the stone images having temple-like niche and halo give us ample scope to reconstruct the earlier architectural pattern experimented in Mithila. Stylistically Mithila temples can be broadly divided into the following types :

1) *Bhadra or tier type :* This is like the Orissan temples consisting of a number of horizontal tiers gradually diminishing upwards and finally with an amalaka sila provided on the top with the help of a narrow cylindrical neck.

2) *Hut type* with sloped roof truncated at the top.

3) Sikhara type as at Ahilyasthana

4) Sikhara type temple with ekchari as at Kalna, Kapileswara etc

5) Gumbad type temple with constricted neck. It would not be out of place to mention here that the Gumbad type of temple sikhara might have originated from the influence of Gaur-Pandua in the Maldah and Dinajpur districts of undivided Bengal which was the centre of the activities of the Sultanates of Bengal in 14 - 15th centuries A.D.

6) Miscellaneous types.

The majority of images and in many cases architectural specimens also can be dated with much greater exactitude than sculptures of any other province or school in India. In the case of a majority of these sculptures we do not find their dates engraved upon them. The garbhagriha in all the temples were generally plain and simple. Sometimes the interior of the temple is very simple having a char near the linga.

HUT TYPE :

The Hut Type temple with sloping curvilinear roof derived from thatched structures comes under this group. The sloping roof was accepted to resist excessive rainfall and damage caused by luxuriant growth of vegetation. That is why brick temples in the hut type forms are so very common in this area. It may be surmised that the hut type continued its existence since ancient periods in India down to the present day. It was mainly due to climatic condition as well as due to non-availability of stone in this area. Single hut type temple is modelled after *dochari* with two sloping roofs or thatched huts of Mithila making a roof base carved like the segment of circle to permit the *rapid* draining of water. Just adjacent to it is the main Nagar type or the Indo-Aryan

Sikhar temple in which the main deity is installed. Sometimes the subsidiary shrines are kept in the *dochari* temples. In some of the temples it has a covered varandah. These temples can very well be compared with the dochari or chalachala temples of Bengal. The best examples can be seen at Charbangala of Murshidabad and Vishnupur. In many parts of Mithila single - thatched huts are used as the abode of Gods. The pillars, windows, doors and interior decorations of these temples are made of wood.

SIKHARA TYPE :

The combination of hut and Sikhara Type side by side is not a rare experiment and we have several examples of it. From the Andhara Thari temple we find that the Maithila builders had learnt the use of corbelled arch wherever it was used for construction purpose.

GARBHAGRIHA :

In most of the ancient Siva temples of Mithila we find that it was a common feature to have the Garbhagriha below the surface which can be reached by a descending flight of steps. The upper portion at present is built of thatched hut. Typical example can be seen at Shankarasthana near Lohana road or Mahadeva Math at Gajahara. Stone temples are very rare in Mithila. The existence of earliest stone temples can be evidenced from the stone door-jamb found at Bhit Bhagwanpur, District Madhubani.

The entire outer surface of the temple is plain. Neither the interior nor the exteriors of the temples have any decoration like that at the Jorbangala of Vishnupur in Bengal. But from the door-jamb available it appears that there were decorations on the exterior of the stone temples and the Garbhagriha might have been plain.

The art of Mithila just like that of Bengal during the mediaeval period is essentially religious. Gods and Goddesses whether Buddhist or Brahmanical are of well established iconographic types which are never transformed. Only those who could afford to pay the artist and defray the expenses of materials for the making of the image and its installation for the purpose of worship, had the privilege of enjoying the luxury of earning religious merit. As to the making of the image itself they left it to the artist who was guided by the living tradition, the iconographic canon, and a common heritage of artistic conception. Uptill now no inscription or any other material has been found, which can throw any light on the day to day life of these artists. But it appears that they might have been

of humble origin. Every year stray explorations, stray diggings of tanks or at mounds are incessantly yielding new specimens.

TEMPLE DOOR JAMB

The development of the sikhara i.e., the curvilinear spire seems to be impossible to follow in the present stage of knowledge. It has rightly been said that it is difficult to ascertain the shape of the earliest temples which are no longer in existence and to which some of the detached sculptures must have belonged. It is further stated that the Buddhists might have tried to raise a higher roof (not a single example of which is extant), which led to growth of of the sikhara style. It is said that architectural innovention cannot be made in a day and roof making is supposed to be the most difficult part of the building. Any one can raise four walls but roofing the space thus created is no small a matter. From a sculpture found on the door-jamb of the Bhit - Bhagwanpur temple, reconstruction of the temple has been made. Here we have a Kalasa, Khapuri, Amla and Beki. These are the four parts of the Mastaka.

The exquisite facade of the little known temple at Bhit-Bhagwanpur instantly reveals itself to any one as an example of a typical and splendid school of the ornamental style. *The facade shows a lively feeling for an ornamental form having a superb organisation of decorative elements.* A sensuous delight in which an elaborate floral and geomatric patterns and equally passionate delight in the charms of the female body is shown in the piece. Sensuous, sinuous, eye catching, in other words, a romantic attitude as against the classic, which was simple and gentle, can be observed by examining minutely this architectural member. The non classical architect had a passionate love of rich ornamentation, multiplication and sensuous revealing in lovely forms. The door-jambs have luscious and almost naked women with exquisite bodies and smiling faces. On the body of the temple below the mastaka, we have upper and lower janghas. In the sikhara style of temple just in front of the Mukhadwara, we have a varandha with pillars of the sikhara style in which there used to be either garbhagriha attached with an ekachari or only sikhara style garbhagriha.

ARCHITECTURAL MEMBERS

The various architectural members, specially pillars and door frames, lie scattered throughout the ancient site of Mithila. It was usually the custom to fashion such members either in wood or in stone and the artists, especially those of the Pala period, spared no pains to cover these with elaborate decorations. Stone specimens, because of their durability, are more commonly

found and these members lying about here and there in shapeless ruins testify to the grandeur and grace of the edifices to which they once belonged. The commonest and simplest type of pillar is divided into three sections - the base, the shaft and the capital. Quite a large number of such pillars are found and a good number of them are preserved in the Chandradhari Museum, Darbhanga.

The next important architectural member executed in stone was the door frame of temples, consisting of a pair of upright jambs capped by a lintel. A number of such jambs and lintels have come down to us from different parts of Mithila but complete sets are comparatively rare and can only be seen in the immense door frames recovered from Bhit - Bhagwanpur, District Madhubani.

No complete picture of any temple has been found uptill now where actually these sculptures were housed. There may be several reasons for this. However the author has left no stone unturned to reconstruct and illuminate the history of the temple building activities that prevailed in the past on the soil of Mithila. In connection with this here is a beautiful, carved stone-door-jamb being described. This *prastara* piece has been unearthed from a village known as Bhit - Bhagwanpur, District Madhubani. It is said that this was the capital of Srimalladeva. There is not much information about this ruler. This piece is the door-jamb of a temple from where a number of beautiful sculptures have also been recovered. The carving on this piece can be divided into four rows. On each row there are floral and geometric designs as well as several dancing and other figures.

In the first row, there is the figure of a dwarf with the right leg raised, wearing a necklace. In the second row from the top, a male figure is playing *mridanga.* His right leg is in the back and is bent, touching the earth with his toe ; the left leg is also bent. The figure has beautiful earlobes. The next figure is of a dancing lady. Its right hand is raised and rests on the head. The left is touching the right thigh. The right leg is slightly bent whereas the left leg is completely bent. The breasts are protruding too much. She wears an undergarment whose folds are clearly seen. The third figure is of a standing lady. She holds a rosary in her right hand and the left hangs downward. She is wearing big ornaments in her ears. She is wearing a necklace and her breasts are also very prominent. The third row is full of floral and geometric designs except in the bottom. There is a standing lady. In her right hand she is holding a rosary while in the left she is holding a Kamandalu or pot. She is wearing Yajnopavita, Katibandha, sari and necklace. Her lips are prominent, breasts are protruding and navel is prominently shown. In the fourth

row there is a lady standing in the tribhanga pose looking into a mirror. She is wearing anklets and her legs are crossed. The katibandhas are of beads. The mirror is in the right hand while the left is resting on the head. She is wearing a sari. Such sculptures are very common in Orissan and Khajuraho temples. The second figure is of an amorous couple. The male is touching the breast of the female while the lady is in the reclining pose. Below this figure a temple is shown with amalaka, four tiers and an arch with two pillars. Its Kumbhi is of double Kalasas. In this temple there is a figure of some deity whose right hand is in the abhaya pose, while the left is resting on the hip. The right leg is firm while the left is bent. It is wearing an Yajnopavita, necklace, keyura and an undergarment. In both the ears it has ornaments.

Such beautiful specimen of the mediaeval Maithila art has not been unearthed uptill now from any part of Mithila. This door-jamb helps us in reconstructing the past, as to how the devotees were trying to satisfy their gods and goddesses with songs and dances, which is one of the inherent qualities of Indian life represented in different schools of Indian art, throughout the length and breadth of this country in different periods.

SCULPTURE

In ancient India, art and architecture almost invariably or inevitably went hand in hand. Unfortunately, specimens of sculpture, that can definitely be dated to the 6th or 7th century A.D. are very few. The important reason for the comparative paucity of early specimens of art in our province has to be sought for in the lack of a proper scientific and systematic excavation of ancient sites in Mithila. Most of the specimens of Mithila sculpture, besides those in modern temples, are found lying above ground or mere chance finds from tanks and ditches or excavated from the upper stratum of the soil.

Towards the end of the 7th and the beginning of the 8th century A.D. the history of India begins to take a severe turn in another direction. For one or two centuries more the ideal of an all-India sovereignty still lingers, but the regional spirit or peculiarities gradually get a firm footing and what is better of the Indian becomes effective in all spheres of life. In the political sphere different kingdoms begin slowly to evolve a consciousness of their respective frontiers and this regional outlook gradually reacts on different aspects of culture as well. The local scripts and dialects begin to take definite shapes during the next two centuries, and it is in this formative period that we have to seek for the genesis of all major languages and alphabet of mediaeval and modern

India. The same thing is true even in the case of Mithila art. Even in Mithila, the so called Pala period ushered in a local school which has developed its own characteristics and continued till the end of the ancient Hindu period i.e., 800 to 1200 A.D.

Brahminical culture gathers its strength in the Karnata and Oinivara periods. Vishnu and Siva cults become very popular during these periods. A large number of images of Brahminical gods and goddesses have also been discovered in various parts of Mithila, which testifies to the gradual expansion of Brahminical tradition and culture under the Karnata and the Oinivara rulers. Brahminism made a great headway in Mithila under the patronage of the Karnata and the Oinivara kings. They were devotees and followers of Puranic Brahminism. According to the Smriti traditions, the smartas are panchopasakas-worshippers of Ganesa, Siva, Vishnu, Surya and Sakti. Innumerable images of Vishnu Surya, Parvati, Ganesa and the Navagrahas were discovered. Siva was probably worshipped mainly in the phallus symbol and also in the anthropomorphic form and the Bull. The sculptures of Uma-Mahesvara and of Bhairava reveal the fact that Saivism was also popular in this region.

SAKTI CULT

Like Saivism, the cult of Sakti or Mother Worship is prevalent in Mithila from the earliest time and is very popular even to-day. The Sakti aspect of Durga is represented in various sculptures in the forms of Mahishasuramardini, Simhavahini, Camunda etc. Mithila was famous for the tantric cult during the eleventh and the twelfth centuries A.D. So Sakti worship gained popularity among the people under the patronage of the rulers.

BUDDHIST CULT

Buddhism was not unknown in this region. It flourished simultaneously with the Sakti cult during the 11th and 12th centuries A.D. within a limited area. Buddist artists hailing from this area innovated different forms of the Buddha in their carvings. From the inscriptions on the pedestal of the images of Buddha and other epigraphical sources, we get references to castes like the Koiri, the cultivator class, who donated the images to the Buddist temples. This is borne out from an inscription found on a sculpture of Buddha from a village near Benipatti. Besides, we have a few sculptures of Tara to prove the practice of the worship of Sakti in Vamachara tradition. Due to changes in

the socio-political life in the later centuries Tantrism and Vaishnavism became very popular.

Inspite of remoteness and difficulty of easy communication, the artistic instinct of the age was not at all curbed. It somehow managed to enter Mithila and enrich its art heritage.

Mithila school of sculpture was at its zenith during the mediaeval period. Mithila is the *'stronghold of the popular Hinduism and that of Sanskrit and Sastraic learning'*. It was a great centre of the Sakti, Vishnu and Siva worship. It may further be added that Mithila was closely associated with the Tantric forms of beliefs and practices. Literature as well as recent archaeological remains unearthed from a number of ancient sites from Mithila throw a good deal of light on the religious beliefs of the people.

The Sastras do not allow the installation of any sculpture which is either 'hinanga' or 'adhikanga' because such a devotee would die immediately. The *Vastusara* enumerates in detail the evil, that a sculptor who carves a *'sadosha'* figure, attracts. One should not worship a *'bhagna pratima'*. It is said that one should discard a bhagna pratima (broken image). If the face, ear, nose, navel and waist of a mulanayakapratima is damaged, it should not be worshipped. It is also said in the *Vastusara prakarana*, that if any sculpture is under worship for more than three hundred years and it has been done with *Pranapratistha* by some great man, it should be worshipped even if it is 'vikalanga'. The ritual authorities have criticised the renovation of any stone pratima.

Mediaeval Maithila sculptures can be classified, broadly speaking, into the following groups, :

1) Vishnu - indicating the cult of Vaishnavism
2) Siva - indicating the cult of Saivism
3) Sakti - indicating the cult of Saktism

Besides, a few sculptures of Buddha; Tara, Ganesa, Surya, Brahma, Ganga and Yamuna are also available. The most important cult was of Saivaits and that is why even to-day we find a number of Siva Temples in Mithila. However it should be kept in mind that every Maithila of Mediaeval period was a Sakta, Saiva and Vaishnava. There is a saying prevalent in Mithila viz. *'Antah Saktah bahih Saivah, sabhamadhye tu Vaishnvah'*.

SURYA

The antiquity of Surya worship has not been established in India so far. In the Vedic period, Surya along with Agni and Indra formed a triad. Few scholars believe that the Magas or Scythic Brahmanas were first to introduce the sun worship in this country.

It is said that in ancient India, realising the power of Nature-God, Sun, man started to depict him on rocks, stone tools and painted his images on the cave dwellings, though such depiction was crude and symbolic. In the Indus Valley Culture the sun worship is represented by symbols and designs on the seals and pottery. In the Rigveda, the Surya and his various aspects were invoked and worshipped under various names. Surya is the son of Dyaus and his mother is Aditi. He sits on a wheeled car drawn by a single horse or by seven horses. In later Vedic age, Surya is identified with the soul of all movable and stationary things of the world. He became very popular during the Upanishadic period. In the Gayatri mantra Surya is invoked to impel human intellect. In the recent archaeological excavation-finds he is seen as represented by a circle with radiating rays starting from its circumference. The Grihya-Sutras illustrate the importance of Surya in our samskaras. In Buddhist literature ample reference of Surya is made. The foreigners who visited India have described Sun worship in the country. In the epics we find the ways of the Sun worship and the concept of Sun God and its popularity amongst the general public. For the first time we find that Sandhya Upasana is emphasised in the Mahabharata. On the potteries of Megalithic culture of Mauryan and Sunga periods we find Surya as depicted by a circle with radiating rays. In the Gupta period the Sun Temple was constructed (eg., at Mandasor) and Prasastis were written. In the later Gupta period royal patronage was given to the deity. Senas of Bengal were devout worshippers of Surya and he was worshipped with Pushpa, Dhupa, Deepa, Taila, Nritta, Ghrita, etc.

The earliest Sun images carved in the Gupta age have been discovered at Kamarpur and Niyamatpur in the Rajashahi District.

A number of Surya images have been found in South Bihar. An inscription of the time of the later Guptas discovered at Deo Barnark mentions Bhojaka Brahmanas who were the ministrents of the temple dedicated to Sun God. Other images have been reported from Badgaon, District Nalanda, Akbarpur Dapthu, Deo, Deoghar, Deomarkandeya, Gaya, Kandaha, Congari, Pawapuri, Punarak, Rajgir, Shahapur, Telkpuri, Uinga etc.

On the door frame of the Surya temple at Kandaha, district Saharsa, a sanskrit inscription recording the construction of the temple by a Brahmana named Vamsadhara, under the orders of the King Narsimhadeva of the Kameswara Dynasty of Mithila was found. It is dated to Saka 1357 (1435 A.D.). Thus we find that the Surya worship was popular not only to the south of the river Ganga but also to its North. Even today, in Mithila, Surya worship is very common amongst all the castes. All Sundays of Bhadrapada, Shadamasika Ravi and Chhatha Puja are performed by the ladies even now with great devotion for the welfare of their children. The main purpose behind the Sun worship is to acquire good health.

Recently a beautiful rare image of the Surya has been found from Nahar-Bhagwatipur, District Madhubani. It is kept in a temple and is being worshipped. It is a standing image about five feet in length and is guarded with the greatest possible accuracy and fully in accordance with the description of the Surya images of the sastras. The face of the deity is oval shaped and the eyes are in dhyanamudra. The Kundalas are found and the ears are oblong. The deity holds two lotus blossoms by their stalks in each of the hands. It has a beautiful necklace over the chest and an yajnopavita, which we do not find in the early images.

The Yajnopavita is shown by three minute threads hanging down from the left shoulder. The left hand is broken. The main deity is standing with a circular halo round the head. It wears a Kirita Mukuta and bracelets. The footwear is partially hidden. The deity is clad in a dhoti tied round the waist with a girdle clasped in front. A sword hangs to his left. The scarf passes round the waist and is gracefully knotted to the right. The two male figures Danda, Pingala with pen and inkpot in the hands, are his attendants. They are more prominently shown than the Queens of the Deity. Ushas and Pratyushas - his queens are shown to the right and left of the Deity respectively, shooting arrows which symbolises the Sun's rays dispelling the darkness. These two female figures are very small. The two other larger female figures, one on each side, may be the two other Queens (Sandhya and Chhaya) of the Deity or female attendants. In the elaboration of the Sun image in the mediaeval sculptures, we find one beautiful female figure shown on the pedestal between the legs of the main deity as seen here. This is of the other Queen whose name is Nikshubha (also called Mahasveta). The charioteer Aruna with the horse is shown in the centre near the base. Thus we find that this standing image of the Sun God is carved with great accuracy and in accordance with the description in the Sastras. This figure is purely indigenous in character, shape as well as in structure.

There is no so called alien feature in it. The image is practically in perfect condition.

RARE NRITYA GANESA

The well-carved sculpture of Ganesa from Bhit - Bhagwanpur, which is illustrated here, is a unique Maithila Nritya Ganesa. It depicts him as dancing with vigour on double petalled Kamala. It is one of the rare variety so far reported from Eastern India and surpasses even those dancing Ganesas of South India. The God is eight armed, the left front hand is in the *Gajahasta Mudra*. The deity is holding Modaka - Bhanda, Kamala, Sarpa, and Parasu, in the four hands. The attributes in its other hands are not clear. Its trunk is lifted up towards the right which is a rare feature. It wears a well arranged Jata with a miniature Kirtimukha in the centre on the top of the gajamastaka. A row of chain ornaments enclose the temple - portion. The attractive posture in which the deity is carved, is full of grace. This and other such details of the sculpture, demonstrate in a peculiar and remarkable way, the mastery of the artists. This also establishes that the artistic heritage of Mithila, was created by Somani artists who have converted many of the shapeless, grotesque stones into elegent pieces of art, and still remained anonymous. The sculptor is completely successful in emphasising the whirling motion by the pose of the two legs. The three or more *atibhangas* in the body and the disposition of the number of arms is unique. His vahana (mouse) is carved above a lotus. The asana on which Ganapati is sitting, shows several persons playing musical instruments. This nritya Ganapati of Mithila has surpassed in beauty even those Ganapati sculptures found at Khitching (Mayarbhanj) Orissa. Can we compare this Nritya Ganapati of Mithila with such mediaeval sculptures of Bengal! Can we not say that as far as the history of sculptures goes, there was a well established artistic contact between the states Bengal, Orissa and Mithila upto the early Mediaeval period ?

VISHNU

Vishnu, one of the Hindu trinity, is considered as the most potent deity of the Hindu Pantheon. He takes the designation of Brahma, Vishnu, and Siva, accordingly as when he creates, preserves and destroys. He is the symbol of perpetual life and preservation of what exists. He is in fact a Vedic God, who is mentioned in all the four Vedas-the Rigveda, the Yajurveda, the Samaveda and the Atharva Veda. He is identified with Sun. Vishnu as Narayana is said to reside in the orb of the Sun and, as such, he even to day is worshipped on Sundays and other prescribed auspicious occasions as Surya-Narayana. In the

Satapatha-Brahmana, the Adityas (sons of Aditi) are refered to be eight in number and in another instance twelve in number and Vishnu is included among them. 'Mahabharata' refers to Vishnu as the twelfth Aditya who surpasses all Adityas in greatness and glory of his attributes. In the later period of the 'Itihasas' and Puranas, the supremacy of Vishnu is clearly established and he has established his position as one in the Hindu trinity.

The material for the description of the images of Vishnu are abundantly seen throughout the length and breadth of this country. The principal image in a Vishnu temple is generally represented in one of the three postures — standing (sthanaka-Murti) sitting (Asina-Murti) and reclining (Sayana-Murti). These are further classifed into Vira, Yoga and Bhoga postures. Images of Vishnu are shown with a royal parasol, a lock of hair, srivatsa on his chest and the shining jewel 'Kaustubha'. In his four hands are a conch, a discus (sudarsana), a mace and a bow. He wears armlets, a garland (vaijayantimala), a diadem and ear-rings shaped as sea monsters (makara-kundalas). The four arms of Vishnu represent the four stages of development of all forms of life, also the dominion over the four cardinal directions of space and absolute power, the four aims of life (i.e., pleasure, success, righteousness and liberation) which result in the division of human life into four periods of the Hindu Society into four castes and history into four ages or Yugas. They also represent four aspects of human destiny and the four Vedas. The discus symbolises the mind, the bow symbolises the casual power of illusion from which arises the universe, the conch symbolises the five elements, representing in turn the creative tendency and the mace symbolises the notion of individual existance.

Vishnu is always depicted as wearing a thin yellow dhoti (pitambara) which drapes round the hips, through which the dark body of the deity shines. Lakshmi is his consort while Garuda, half man half Vulture, is his Vahana. He is shown asleep on a thousand-headed gigantic serpent called Adisesha. Jaya and Vijaya are two attendants or door-keepers of Vaikuntha, Vishnu's celestial abode. Incarnations of Vishnu are considered to be of three kinds – Avatara, Avesa and Amsa. A complete incarnation is designated as an Avatara, a partial, incarnation an Avesa, while the incarnation of a portion of the power of a divine being is characterised as Amsa. Whenever lawlessness prevailed on earth and evil forces became strong, Vishnu left his celestial abode and assumed various forms to establish law and order, the rule of righteousness and to protect Gods, saints (Rishis), scriptures and prosperity.

There are numerous Avataras of Vishnu, but the most important and commonly accepted ones are only ten (Dasavataras). These are 1) Matsya (Fish), 2) Kurma (Tortoise), 3) Varaha (Boar), 4) Narasimha, (Man-lion) 5) Vamana (Dwarf), 6) Parasurama, 7) Ramachandra, 8) Krishna, 9) Buddha, and 10) Kalki. The first five lived in a world other than ours. The next four were born on earth as men and the last one is yet to come; after which the world ends. Apart from the above incarnations, there are also a few partial incarnations of Vishnu, which came to earth to maintain and interpret the revelation such as Kumara, Narada, Narayana, Dattatreya, etc. The incarnations of Matsya, Kurma and Varaha are often considered as manifestations of Prajapati or Brahma.

Images of Matsya resemble an ordinary fish or half fish and half man with upper portion of a man. The fish has four hands, two of which carry the Sankha and Cakra and the other two are in Varada and Abhaya poses. Vishnu took the form of Kurma to support Mandara mountain and went to the bottom of the ocean and supported the mountain on his back at the time of the churning of Milky Ocean. In this Avatara, Vishnu is depicted as a tortoise or human body with a tortoise head or a tortoise body with a human head. He is often shown with one, two or three eyes with Sri and Pusti or with his consorts Sridevi and Bhudevi. He wears the crown Kiritamukuta, two of his four hands carry the Sankha and Cakra and the other two are held in Varada and Abhaya mudra. In the Varaha Avatara, Vishnu took the form of Varaha and dived into the ocean, killed Hiranyaksha the demon and refloated the earth above the level of ocean. In the Narasimha Avatara, Vishnu took the form of man-lion, killed Hiranyakasipu and saved Prahlada. Iconographically, Narasimha is shown either seated or standing ferociously or benign with a lions's head and a human body. In his ferocious aspect (Ugra Narasimha) he is shown with three big and bulging eyes and is usually depicted with four hands, but sometimes with 2,8 or even with 16 hands. In benign form he is shown sitting or standing with his consorts and showing signs of yogic inclination (yoga Narasimha). In the Vamana Avatara, Vishnu took the form of Vamana and asked Bali to grant him three strides and on the grant covered the earth (Bhuloka), the heaven (Antarikaloka) and there being no space for the third step, kept his foot on the head of the demon king Bali and pushed him into the nether world (Patalaloka). Here Vamana has two arms and his complexion is black. In the Parasurama Avatara, Vishnu took birth as a Brahmana to annihilate the Kshatriyas who became arrogant. He is called Parasurama because he carried an axe (Parasu) presented to him by Siva. He is depicted as having a virile figure carrying an axe in his right hand and the left hand in

suci pose. In the Ramavatara, Vishnu took the form of a man to kill the ten-headed demon chief Ravana, the ruler of Lanka, to re-establish on earth justice and happiness. Rama is shown with a bow in one hand, arrows being held in the other hand or in a sling on his back. He is usually depicted as with Sita and Lakshmana on either side and Hunuman in front. In the Krishnavatara, Vishnu took birth to kill Kamsa and Sisupala. Iconographically Krishna is shown along with his wives, Rukmini and Satyabhama (incarnations of Lakshmi and Bhu Devi respectively). He holds a flute or the butter ball in his hands. In the Buddhavatara, Vishnu took birth in the earth during the Kaliyuga as an embodiment of illusion and delusion. He is sculptured as being seated on a lotus seat in meditation posture with long ears or as standing with his hands in the Abhayapose. The tenth and the last Avatara of Vishnu i.e. of Kalki is yet to come. At the end of the Kaliyuga he will come riding on a white horse and carrying a sword in his hand. He will punish the sinners. His image is sculptured with a face of a horse and the body of a man.

Lakshmi, the Goddess of wealth and prosperity is shown sitting at the feet of Vishnu when he is shown sleeping on Adisesha.

It is not possible to give here an iconographic account of all the other aspects and incarnatory forms of Vishnu for want of space.

Some of the important images of Vishnu are described below: Four armed Vishnu standing in Samapada Sthanaka pose on a lotus pedestal. He is holding gada, cakra, sankha in three of his hands. The lower right hand is broken. His vanamala is shown hanging upto knee level. Decorated with almost the usual ornaments like Kiritamukuta, ear-ring, armlets, bangles, payal etc., Lakshmi with Gauri and Saraswati with a Vina are shown respectively to the right and left of Vishnu. Besides, to the extreme right and left of Lakshmi and Saraswati are shown sankhapurusha and cakrapurusha respectively. The black slab or halo is profusely decorated with the Gaja-sardula motif, flying Gandharvas, Kinnaras etc. On the top of the pointed halo is depicted the Kirtimukha. It is datable to *C* 11th Century A.D.

CAMUNDA

The image of Camunda seated in *ardhaparyankamudra* is represented with eight arms. The upper two hands are (right and left) shown upwards and possibly one holding an elegant gada. The remaining hands on the right side hold respectively daggar, damaru (kettle drum), skull and cap. Similarly the left lower hand rests on thigh and the other two holding respectively the trident

and a human head. The emaciated body of the deity is shown in a conventional way with the help of bold ridge on arms and legs of the body. Though sunken and protruding eyes are shown, somehow the artist has failed to give a fierce look as found in the case of other Camunda images of the Pala period. Her right leg is hanging downwards and rested on the head of a corpse lying below the pedestal. The workmanship is datable to *C* 12th Century A.D.

GANGA AND YAMUNA

The representation of Ganga and Yamuna on the doorjambs of the ruined temple of Surya at Kamaladityasthana, Andhra, Tharhi, District Madhubani shows the graceful allegiance. The moulding of the feminine beauty in the bodies is sensitive as well as sensuous. On both the faces seductive smile can be seen, which is a characteristic of the architecture of Mithila in the later periods.

The figure of Yamuna is shown standing on a Kurma within a trefoiled arch. The figure of Dandi is adjacent to it, whereas the figure of Ganga is shown with two figures viz., a chauri bearer and pingala with beards. It may be added that such representations embellishing some of the important Hindu temples have been reported from almost all places of Northern India.

MISCELLANEOUS IMAGES

This group includes the lower part of a highly decorated pillar with Mangala Kalasa and creeper design. Two ganas are shown in the lowermost part of the pillar in Padmasana. Another interesting feature is shown above the foliage motif, possibly in later period the artist has skilfully carved the figure of Durga in the act of slaying the Buffalo Demon (mahisasura). The goddess is shown in the pratyalidhamudra having astabhuja, holding ayudhas in them. Her left leg is shown firmly placed on the ground and the right on the back of the buffalo. The anthropomorphic form of Mahisasura is shown in between her legs just coming out of the Buffalo and finally caught by the deity who slays the demon by piercing her spear into the chest of the asura. It is really a unique representation found at Mithila, that the pillar of an earlier period has been reused by a later sculptor to carve this loving deity. It is datable to *C* 11th Century A.D.

LIST OF ILLUSTRATIONS

1. Standing image of Surya accompanied by his attendants. Right hands are mutilated but he is holding fully blossomed lotuses by their stalks. In this figure Prabhavali has a Kirtimukha design on its top centre. The figure wears a conical crown, ear rings, necklace and other ornaments. Aruna and the seven horses are shown on the relief, besides Dandi, Pingala, Usas, Pratyusas, and his two consorts. It is from Nahar-Bhagwatipur, District Madubani. Stylistically it is datable to *circa* 11th century A.D.

2. Image of Surya standing in his usual samapada pose from Bhadrakali Mandir, Bhagwatipur, District Madhubani. On both the left and the right side, his consort and other Parivara devatas are shown. Besides the sharp pointed halo, on stylistic ground, it is datable to *circa* 11th century A.D.

3. Image of Surya in usual standing pose. The workmanship is somehow superior. The pointed halo does not appear to be a matured one. Roundness is still a predominant feature. Details of his parivara is similar to No. 1. It is from Bhadrakali Mandir, Bhagwatipur, datable to *circa* 10th–11th century A.D.

4. Beautiful four-armed Surya standing in samapada sthanaka pose on a Kamalasana. He is holding respectively gada, cakra, sankha in his hands and the lower right hand is broken. He is wearing boots. Besides Lakshmi and Saraswati, on the right of Lakshmi, Sankha Purusha and to the left of Saraswati, Cakra Purusha are shown artistically. From Bhit-Bhagwanpur, it is datable to *circa* 11th century A.D.

5. Image of Surya with mutilated hands from Bhagwatipur. Face is shown flat. Pingala with prominent beard and Dandi with sceptre and two cauri bearers are standing in front of them.

Aruna is shown near to his feet and horses are on the pedestal. It is datable to *circa* 11th century A.D.

6. Image of Surya from Bhadrakali Mandir, Bhagwatipur. It is datable to *circa* 12th century A.D.

7. Image of Surya from Nahar Bhagwatipur. Head is broken. It is datable to 12th–13th century A.D.

8. Standing image of Vishnu from Bideswarasthana, District Madhubani. The prabhavali is plain. Only two flying Gandharvas are shown above. At the lower portion of the pedestal in the middle, Garuda the vahana of the God is shown with folded hands. Workmanship is crude. It is datable to *circa* 13th century A.D.

9. Image of Vishnu. The workmanship is crude. Elongated torso, slender body, round face, oblique eyes show the folk art tradition. It is datable to *circa* 13th century A.D. It is from Girijasthana, Uccaitha, District Madhubani.

10. A beautiful image of Vishnu in standing pose from Bhirava Balia. Upper portion of the Prabhavali is missing. The image is accompanied by Lakshmi and Sarasvati who are represented in a slender and elongated manner. Halo is profusely decorated and ornamented. It is datable to 12th century A.D.

11. A badly weather-worn figure of Vishnu from Andhra Thari. It is datable to 11th century A.D. King Nanyadeva's Minister Shridhara built a Vishnu temple. There is an inscription in Maithili script on the pedestal of the image which runs as follows: '*Om Srimannarayapatirajetaguna ratna maharnavah yatkirtya janitam visvam deveitiya-kshira sagarah Mantrina tasya Nanyasya Kshatra Vamsabja bhanuna, Devoyam Kastih sriman Sridharah Sridharena ca*'. This inscription is also of 11th century A.D.

12. A profusely ornamented image of Vishnu in standing pose on a lotus-stand from Bhit Bhagwanpur. The Prabhavali is over crowded with Gandharvas and Kinnaras and the lower left hand of the image is pointing towards Bhumi. His consorts Lakshmi and Saraswati are shown prominently. It is datable to 11th century A.D.

13. Caturbhuja image of Vishnu (from Keoti Ranway, District Darbhanga) standing in samapada sthanaka pose on a lotus pedestal. He is holding Gada, cakra, sankha. The lower right hand is broken. His vanamala is shown hanging upto knee level. Decorated with almost usual ornaments like Kiritamukuta, ear rings, armlets, bangles, payal, etc. To the right of the main image is Lakshmi with a Cauri. Saraswati with a vina is shown to his left. Besides, to the extreme right and left of Lakshmi and Saraswati, Sankapurusha and Cakrapurusha are shown respectively. On the Prabhavali a flying banner is shown on both sides in place of the Gaja sardula motif besides flying Gandharvas, kinnaras, etc. On the top of the halo is depicted the Kirtimukha. It is datable to *circa* 11th century A.D.

14. A beautiful image of Parvati standing on Kamalasana. The image has four arms. The upper right hand is holding a Siva Linga and the lower one fruit. The upper left hand has a mirror whereas the lower one rests on the head of Kartikeya (or

Lakshmi ?). To her right there is a figure of Ganesa. The deity is decorated with usual ornaments. The sari of the deity has been shown fashionably with the help of ripple-like folds. There is a round decorated prabhavali. At the bottom of the pedestal is shown the alligator (mangoose?). The workmanship is superior. It is from Girijasthana, which is datable to the 11th century A.D.

15. Siva–Parvati image in the alingana-mudra from Bhuvaneswarasthana. Siva is touching the chin of Parvati with his right upper hand whereas in his upper left hand he is holding trisula. Nandi is shown just below Siva and lion just below Parvati. Prabhavali is beautifully decorated with flying gandharvas and kinnaras and gaja–sardula motifs. In the middle of their vahanas, the dancing figure of an emaciated male is shown. He may be Bhringi, who got the emaciated look due to the curse of the Goddess as he was a parama Saiva and he refused to worship Sakti. It is datable to *circa* 11th–12th century A.D.

16. A highly decorated image of Siva–Parvati in their usual alingana pose, from Bhit–Bhagwanpur. It is datable to *circa* 11th century A.D.

17. An unique figure of Siva–Parvati, badly weather-worn. One important feature of this image is that Siva is represented with his normal two arms instead of four. The Prabhavali is completely round. It is datable to *circa* 10th–11th century A.D.

18. Durga–simhavahini seated on a kamalasana in ardhaparyankamudra, from Chaugama. Simha, her vahana is shown below the pedestal. The unusual feature which has been depicted here is that of a naked goblin shown standing on her lap and touching her left breast. It is difficult to identify the figure — it may be representing child Kartikeya. Workmanship is not that superior. It is datable to *circa* 12th century A.D.

19. An image of astabhuja Camunda seated in ardhaparayankamudra. The upper two hands are shown raised upwards possibly holding an elephant gode or skin. The remaining right hands are holding respectively dagger, damaru and skull. Similarly the left lower hand rests on the thigh and other two are holding respectively trisula and a kapala. The emaciated body of the deity is shown in a static and conventional way with the help of bold ridges on arms and legs and on the body. Though the figure is sunken with protruding eyes somehow the artist has failed to give a fierce look which is found usual in other Camunda images of this period. The right leg is hanging downwards and rests on the head of a corpse lying below the pedestal. The workmanship is datable to *circa* 12th century A.D.

20. Dancing Ganesa from Bhit-Bhagwanpur. It is datable to *circa* 10th century A.D. (See page 30)

21. The four armed figure of Ganesa from Bhagwanpur is seated in Raja lila pose. He is wearing a necklace, yajnopavita, angada, bracelets, dhoti and anklets. The attributes in his hands are a parasu, a modaka bhanda, a rosary or an aksha mala. The object in the upper right hand is not clear—possibly carrot. The face of Ganesa is badly damaged. It belongs to *circa* 12th century A.D.

22. The fragmentary figure shows head and an arm of Ganesa from Bhuvaneswaranatha,

Bhagwatipur. He is wearing mukuta, kundala and yajnopavita. A lotus and modakabhanda are shown in upper and lower left arms. Stylistically it belongs to *circa* 11th century A.D.

23. Fragments of a Door-jamb depicting Gajalakshmi in the middle and having navagrahas on both the sides. It is from Bhit-Bhagwanpur. It is datable to *circa* 10th century A.D.

24, 25. Lintel, door-jamb from Bhit-Bhagwanpur. They are datable to *circa* 10th century A.D.

26. Door-jamb, reconstructed from Bhit-Bhagwanpur.

27. A 10th century temple reconstructed from the fragments of the door-jamb.

28. Yamuna on Tortoise and Dandi shown within a tree foil arch. Workmanship is superior. This figure is carved on a doorjamb of a Vishnu temple built by King Nanyadeva's Minister Shridhara in *circa* 11th century A.D.

29. Cauri bearer, Pingala and Sanga on Makara are shown within tree foil arch. The workmanship is superior. From the same fragments of the doorjamb at Andhra Thari. It is datable to *circa* 10th century A.D.

30. A damaged image of Buddha in bhumisparsamudra seated on a double petalled lotus seat. Donor's name is engraved below lotus seat. The inscription reads *'Yena dharmadatta Koiri'*. It is from Manapatti, Dt. Darbhanga. It is datable to 11th century A.D.

31. A badly weather-worn figure of Buddha in Bhumisparsamudra seated on kamalasana. From Bideshwarasthana, it is datable to *circa* 11th–12th century A.D.

32. Bronze figure of Garuda from Durgasthana, Mangarauni. Stylistically it is datable to *circa* 11th–12th century A.D.

33. Image of female deity possibly Kali sitting in a paryankamudra from Girijasthana, Phulahara. It is datable to *circa* 11th century A.D.

34. A beautiful damaged image of Vishnu from Bhit-Bhagwanpur. It is datable to *circa* 11th century A.D.

35. Image of Surya from Nahar. It is datable to the 13th century A.D.

36. A beautiful head of Siva from Jogeswaranatha temple at Nahar. It is datable to *circa* 12th century A.D.

37. Bust of Ekamukhi Siva from Girijasthana, Uccaitha – *circa* 13th century A.D.

38. A torso of Lokeswara from Kapileswarasthana. It is datable to 11th century A.D.

39. An image of Agni seated in ardhaparyankamudra on a lotus pedestal. The figure is

having a sharp, pointed beard with rosary in his right hand and Kamandalu in his defaced left hand shown downwards. Besides his dwarf statue with apot belly, flames of fire are shown at the back on the prabhavali. Below his right leg is shown small figure of a ram, his vahana. Figures of devotees are depicted on either side below pedestal. It is datable to *circa* 10th century A.D.

40. A beautiful figure of Tara seated in ardhaparyankamudra from Mangarauni. In the prabhavali, votive stupas are shown. Two female attendants are standing on either side of the Goddess. The effigies of an image of Budha is shown on the apex of the prabhavali. It is datable to *circa* 11th century A.D.

41. Mahishasuramardini, Chandradhari Museum. It is datable to *circa* 12th century A.D. It appears that the figure has been carved late. It is a monolithic pillar with a Kalasa at the base with foliage designs and a few figures are seen in the bottom.

42. Foliage design with kalasa of a stone pillar from Chandradhari Museum, Darbhanga. It is datable to *circa* 12th century A.D.

43. A dwarf from of Rudra from Bhairava Balia, District Dharbhanga. He is represented with protruding eyes, beard, canine teeth with an open mouth, flames of fire shown behind. He is wearing mundamala. The artist has left no stone unturned to give it a fierce and fearful look. Workmanship is superior. On stylistic ground, it is datable to *circa* 10th century A.D.

44. A decorative panel in the form of a half medallian with an amalaka like mastaka from Mangarapetti. The workmanship is very crude possibly done by an inexperienced artist or by a folk artist. It is representing a multi-armed God and Goddess, giving a tantric flavour.

45. Exquisitely carved Gargoyle (makaramukha prabhavali) from Chaugama. It is datable to *circa* 10th-11th century A.D.

46. General view of the Ahilyasthana temple, District Darbhanga. It is an example of Indo-Aryan type having curvilinear tower with Angasikharas.

47. Ahilyasthana temple showing the mouldings from south.

48. Ahilyasthana temple view from south.

49. Kankali temple, Rajnagar, District Madhubani. This temple and other temples at Rajnagar were built by Maharaja Rameswara Singh of Darbhanga.

50. Durga temple, Rajnagar.

51. Murali Manohara temple, Madhubani.

52. Girijasthana temple, Phulahara, District Darbhanga.

53. Jogeswaranatha temple, Nahar, District Madhubani.

54. Brijbihari Mandir, Madhubani.

55. Rajeswara Mandir, Dokahara. There is a three-sided open varandah in front of the

main temple which has a flat root with a sikhara-like structure in the middle. It is a modification of hut type temples.

56. Another view of Rajeswara mandir.

57. Gaurisankara temple, Gandheshwarasthana, Sivanagar near Jogiyara, District Darbhanga. It is a combined temple representing dome-shaped sikhara and of modified charbangala type.

58. Bhadrakali temple, Bhagwatipur, having Gumbad type roof with sides opening.

59. Siva temple, Bhuvaneswaranath, Bhagwatipur. In the background, is the main temple which is Gumbad type without having any neck, with ekchari varandah with three openings. The front one representing the roof of Jore Bangla type of Vishnupur, Bengal.

60. Siva temple, Madhubani with Gumbad type roof having constricated neck. It has openings on all the four sides.

61. Navarathana temple, Mangarauni with three Gumbad type roof without any neck (or wide neck). In front of the Gumbad, there is an opan varandah with three arched openings.

62. General view of Rama Mandir, Nahar. Gumbad type, having three side openings with a flat roofed varandah.

63. Gumbad type temple at Bhairava Balia having no varandah and only one entrance.

64. Gumbad type old temple at Koilakha, with long necked and flat roofed varandah with three arched entrance of which side entrances are false ones and blocked.

65. Siva temple at Kalna, District Madhubani. It has a Garbhagriha of Gumbad flat type with no decorations anywhere. In front of the entrance there is a truncated roof building with only one entrance. Subsidiary shrines are also seen here.

66. Flat pointed Siva temple at Kapileswarasthana with entrance on three sides. Near to it is a building with Dochari type roof used as subsidiary shrine. We have such temples at other places also.

67. Siva temple, Gandeshwarasthana, Sivanagar with a varandah having three entrances with a conical sikhara.

68. Two Gumbad type temples with a palanquin type flat roof serving as varandah from Krishnamandir, Mirzapur, Darbhanga.

69. Temple of Ekchari type from Bhit-Bhagwanpur.

PAINTING:

As discussed earlier, non-permanency of temple building materials as well as the damp climatic condition of Mithila due to constant heavy rains largely caused the decay and destruction of earlier paintings. The available examples mainly belong to 18th and 19th century A.D.

70. Painting on the ceiling of the Ahilyasthana Mandir. Mostly floral and geometric designs are seen. Colours used are red, green, black, blue, etc.

71. Painting on the wall of the Ahilyasthana Mandir, Tamoriya.

ILLUSTRATIONS (Plates)



1. Surya, Nahar-Bhagwatipur, Dist. Madhubani —*circa* 11th Century A.D.



2. Surya, Bhadrakali Mandir, Bhagwatipur— 11th Century A.D.

Plate II



3. Surya, Bhadrakali Mandir, Bhagwatipur Dist. Madhubani—10th-11th Century A.D.



4. Surya, Bhit Bhagwanpur Dist. Madhubani—11th Century A.D.



5. Surya, Bhagwatipur,—*circa* 11th Century A.D.



6. Surya, Bhadrakali Mandir, Dist. Madhubani—*circa* 12th Century A.D.

Plate IV



7. Headless Surya, Nahar Bhagwatipur,—
circa 13th Century A.D.



8. Vishnu, Bideswarasthana, Dist. Madhubani,—
circa 13th Century A.D.



9. Vishnu, Girijasthana, Uccaitha, Dist. Madhubani,—*circa* 13th Century A.D.



10. Vishnu, Bhairava-Balia, Dist. Madhubani—12th Century A.D.

Plate VI



11. Vishnu, Andhra Tharhi, Dist. Madhubani,—*circa* 11th Century A.D.



12. Vishnu, Bhit–Bhagwanpur,—*circa* 11th Century A.D.



13. Vishnu, Keoti Ranway, Dist. Darbhanga—*circa* 11th Century A.D.



14. Parvati, Girijasthana, Phulahara,—*circa* 11th Century A.D.

Plate VIII



15. Siva-Parvati, Bhuvaneswarasthana, Mangarauni, Dist. Madhubani,—12th Century A.D.



16. Siva-Parvati, Bhit-Bhagwanpur,—*circa* 11th Century A.D.



17. Siva-Parvati, Madhubani,—*circa* 10th–11thCentury A.D.



18. Durgasimhavahini, Chaugama—*circa* 12th Century A.D.

Plate X



19. Ashtabhuja Camunda, Koilakha—*circa* 12th Century A.D.



20. Dancing Ganesa, Bhit-Bhagwanpur—*circa* 10th Century A.D.

Plate XII



21. Ganesa, Bhagwatipur,—*circa* 12th Century A.D.



22. Ganesa, Bhuvaneswaranatha, Bhagwatipur,—*circa* 11th Century A.D.

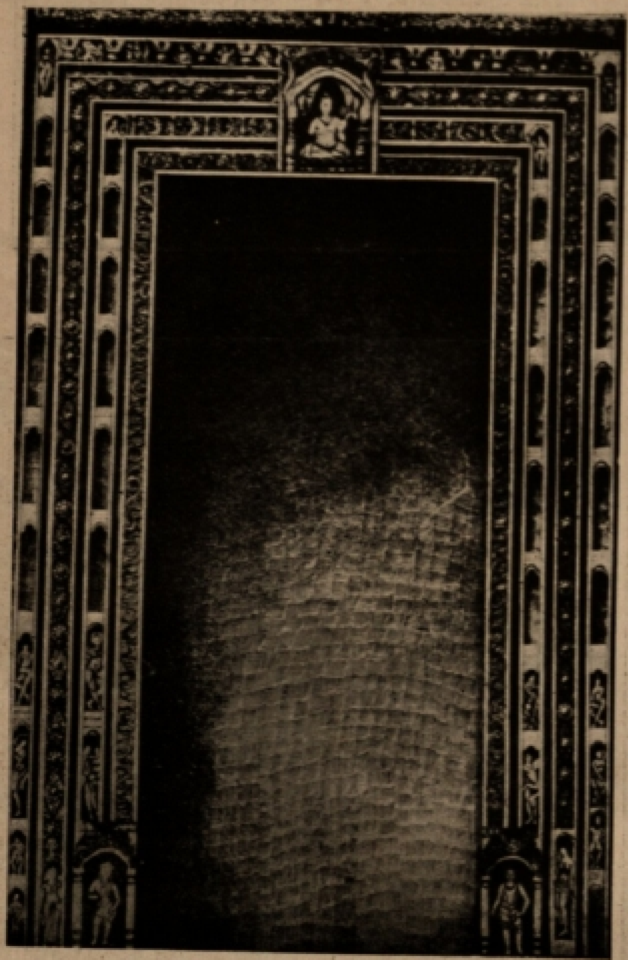






23–25. Fragments of a Door-jamb, Bhit Bhagwanpur—*circa* 10th Century A.D.

Plate XIV



26. Reconstructed door jamb from Bhit-Bhagwanpur.



27. Reconstruction of a 10th Century Temple.





28. Yamuna and Dandi, Andhra Tharhi —*circa* 10th Century A.D.







29. Ganga, Pingala and Cauri bearer, Andhra Tharhi,—*circa* 10th Century A.D.

Plate XVI



30. Buddha in Bhumisparsamudra with an inscription 'yena dharmadatta koeri', Manapaura, Dist. Darbhanga—*circa* 11th Century A.D.



31. Buddha in Bhumisparsamudra, Bideswarasthana,—*circa* 12th Century A.D.

32. Bronze Garuda, Durgasthana, Manga-rauni—*circa* 14th Century A.D.



33. Kali (?) Girijasthana, Phulahara—*circa* 11th Century A.D.



Plate XVIII



34. Vishnu, Bhit-Bhagwanpur—11th Century A.D.



35. Surya, Nahar,—*circa* 13th Century A.D.



36. Siva, Jogeshwarnath, Nahar—*circa* 12th Century A.D.



37. Ekamukhi Siva, Girijasthana Uccaitha, Madhubani—*circa* 13th Century A.D.



38. Lokeswara, Kapileswarasthana,—*circa* 11th Century A.D.

Plate XX



39. Agni, Bideswarasthana—*circa* 10th Century A.D.



40. Tara, Mangarauni, Dist Madhubani—*circa* 11th Century A.D.



41. A Monolithic Pillar with Kalasa over which Mahisasuramardini, Chandradhari Museum, Darbhanga–*circa* 12th Century A.D.



42. Monolithic pillar with a Kalasa having foliage design—*circa* 12th Century A.D.

Plate XXII

44. A decorative panel in the form of half medallion, Mangarpatti

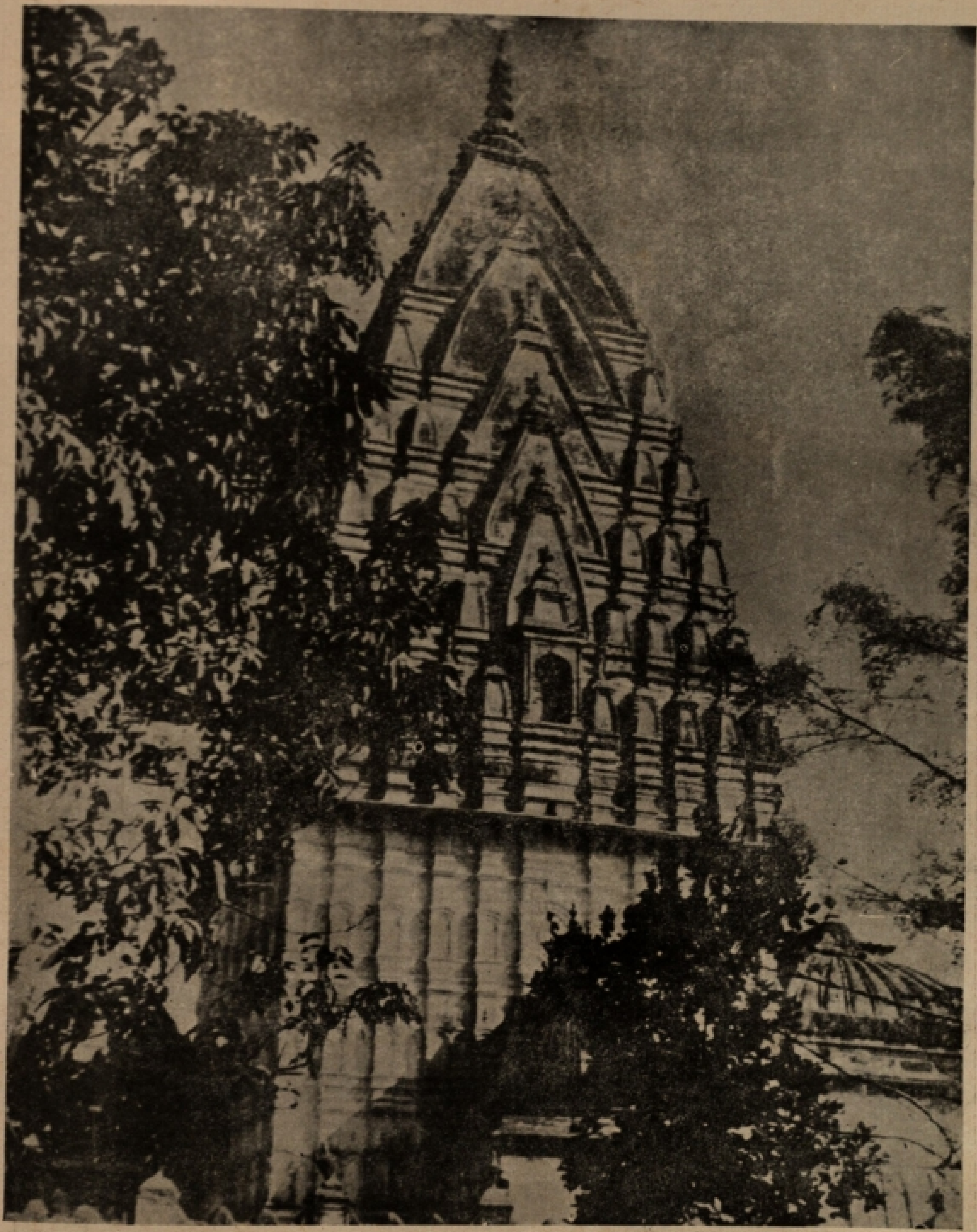




43. Rudra, Bhairava Balia—*circa* 10th Century A.D.



45. Gorgyle, chaugama—*circa* 10th–11th Century A.D.



46. Ahilyasthana, Dist. Darbhanga

Plate XXIV



47. Ahilyasthana showing moulding from South.

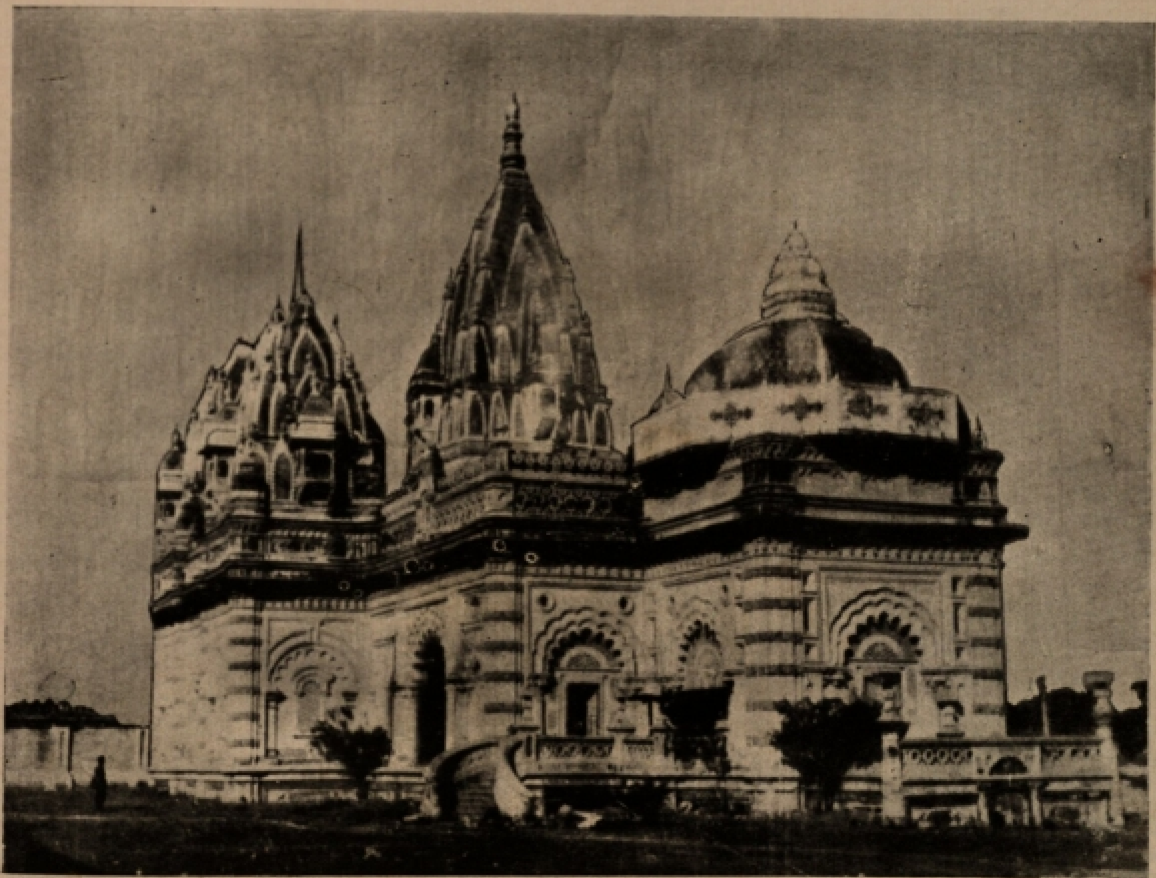


48. Ahilyasthana temple.

Plate XXVI

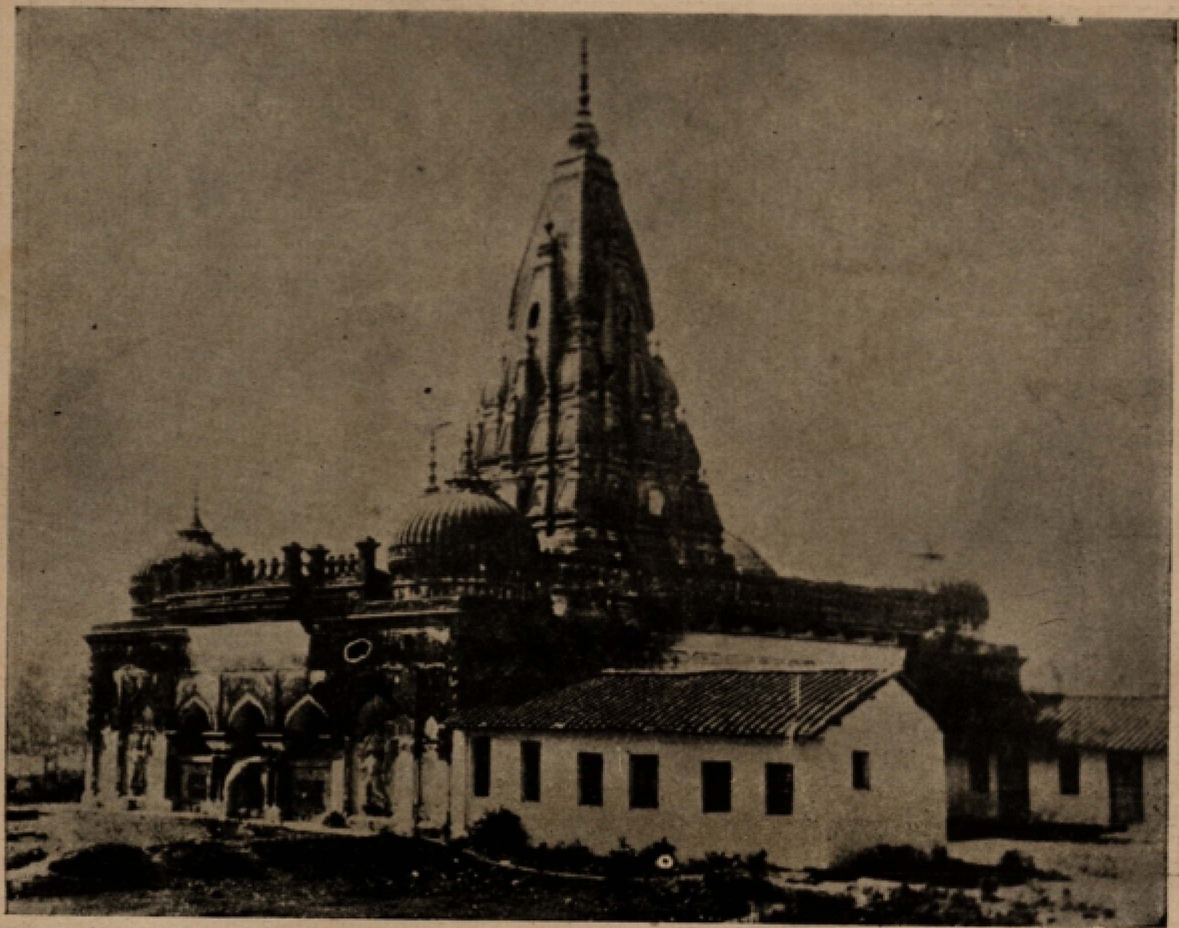


49. Kankali Temple, Rajnagar.



50. Durga Temple, Rajnagar.

Plate XXVIII



51. Murlimanohar Mandir, Madhubani.

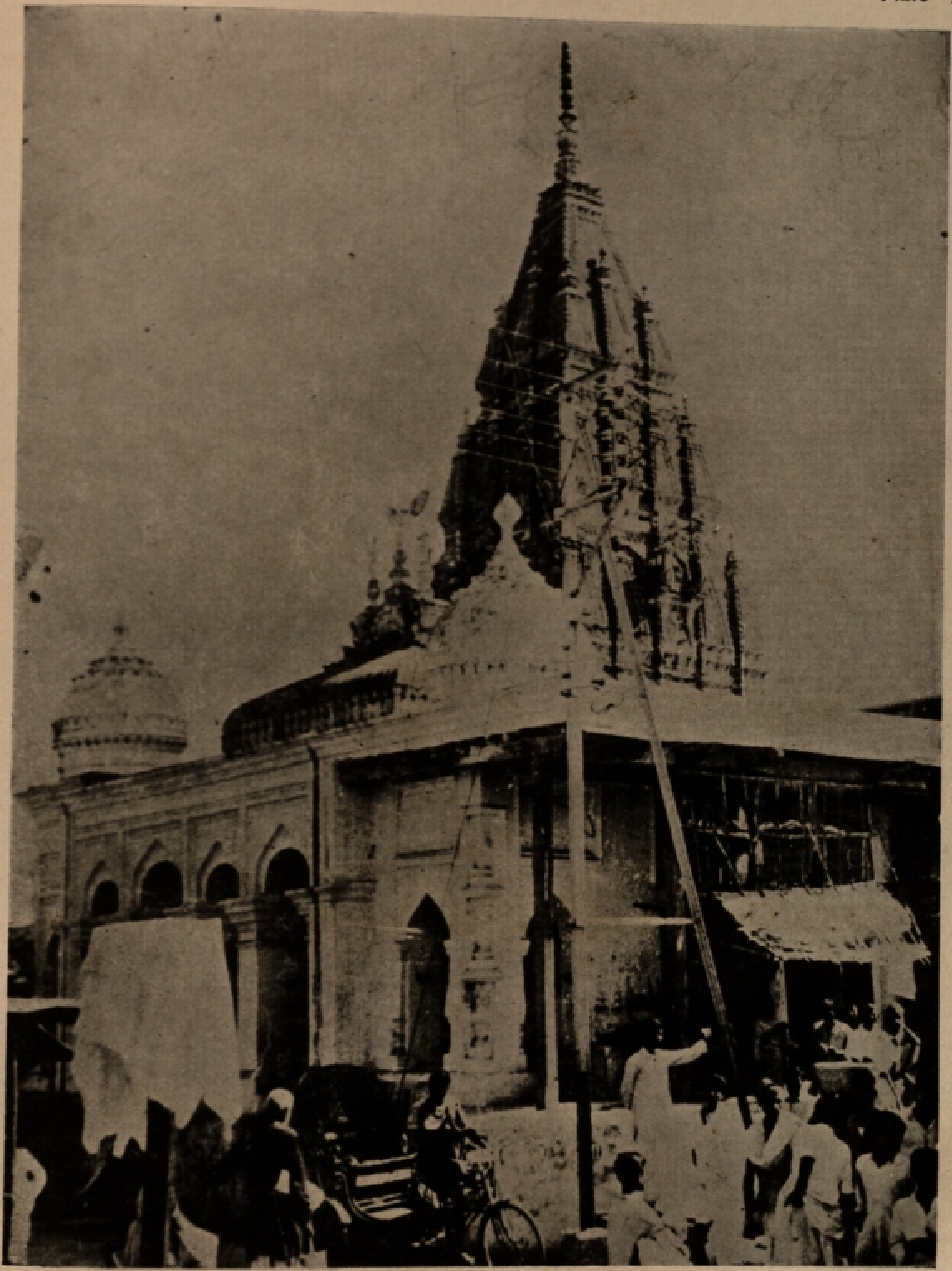


52. Girijasthana Temple, Phulahara.

Plate XXX



53. Jogeshwaranath Temple, Nahar.



54. Brijbihari Mandir, Madhubani.

Plate XXXII



55. Rajeshwara Mandir, Dokahara.



56. Rajeshwara Mandir, another view.

Plate XXXIV

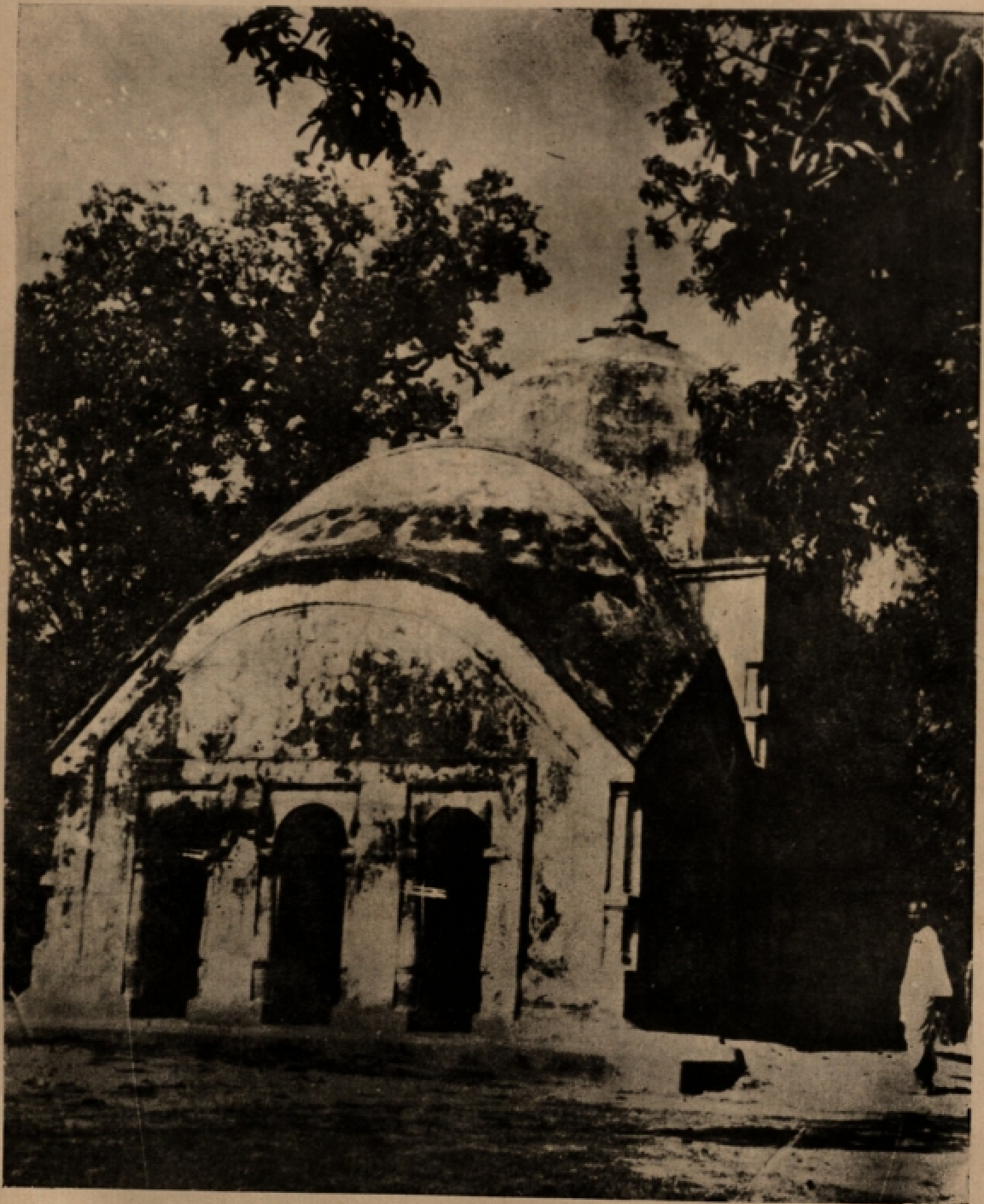


57. Gaurisankara Mandir, Gandeswarasthana, Sivanagar, near Jogiyara, Dist. Darbhanga.



58. Bhadrakali Mandir, Nahar-Bhagwatipur.

Plate XXXVI



59. Siva Temple, Bhuvaneswaranath, Bhagwatipur.



60. Siva Temple, Madhubani.

Plate XXXVIII



61. Navaratna Temple, Mangarauni.



62. General view of Ram Mandir, Nahar.

Plate XL



63. Gumbad Type Temple at Bhairava Balia.



64. Gumbad type old Temple, Koilakha.

Plate XLII



65. Siva Temple, Kalna with Dochari.



66. Siva Temple, Kapileswarasthana.

Plate XLIV

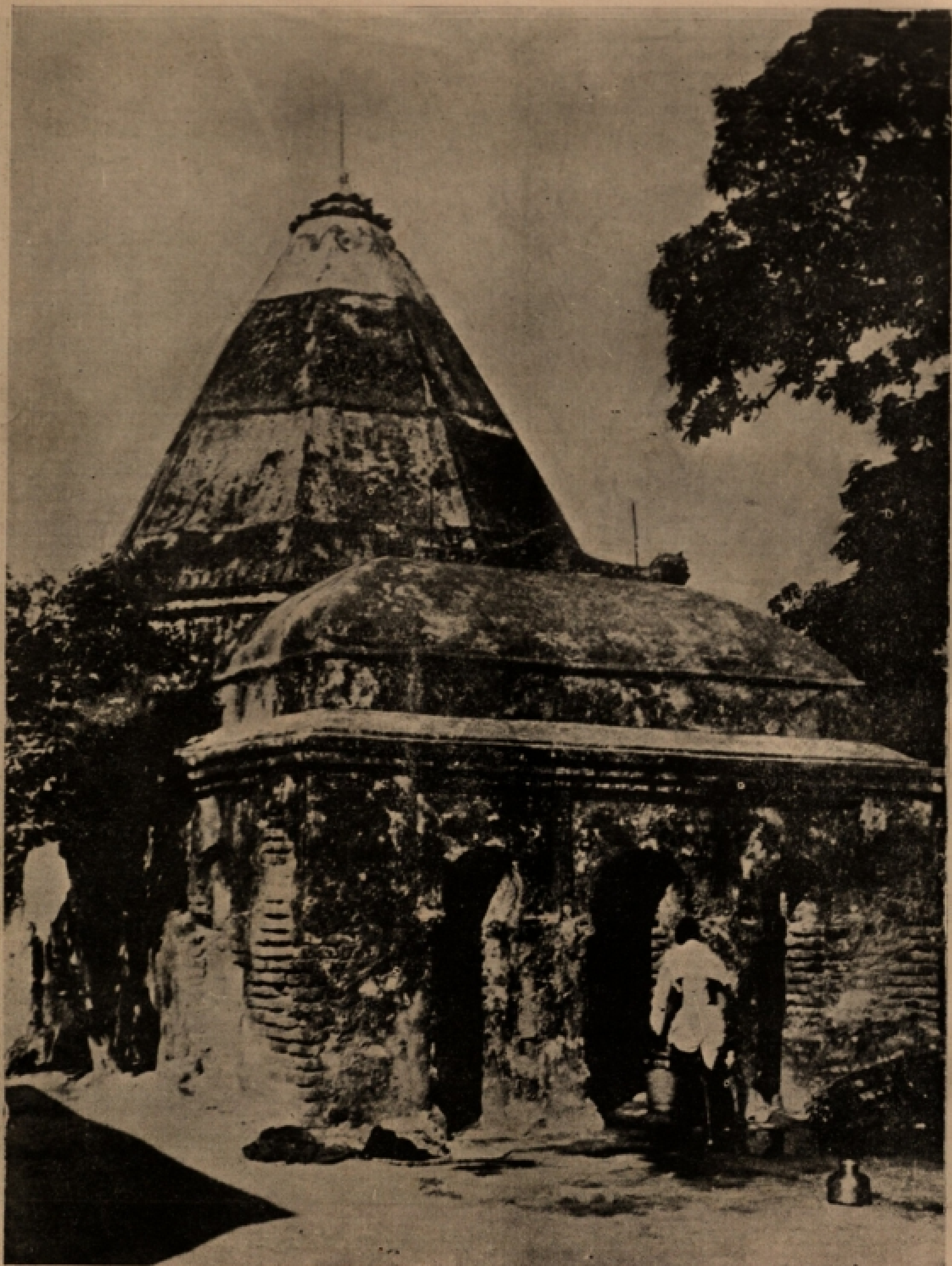


67. Siva Temple, Gandeswarasthana.

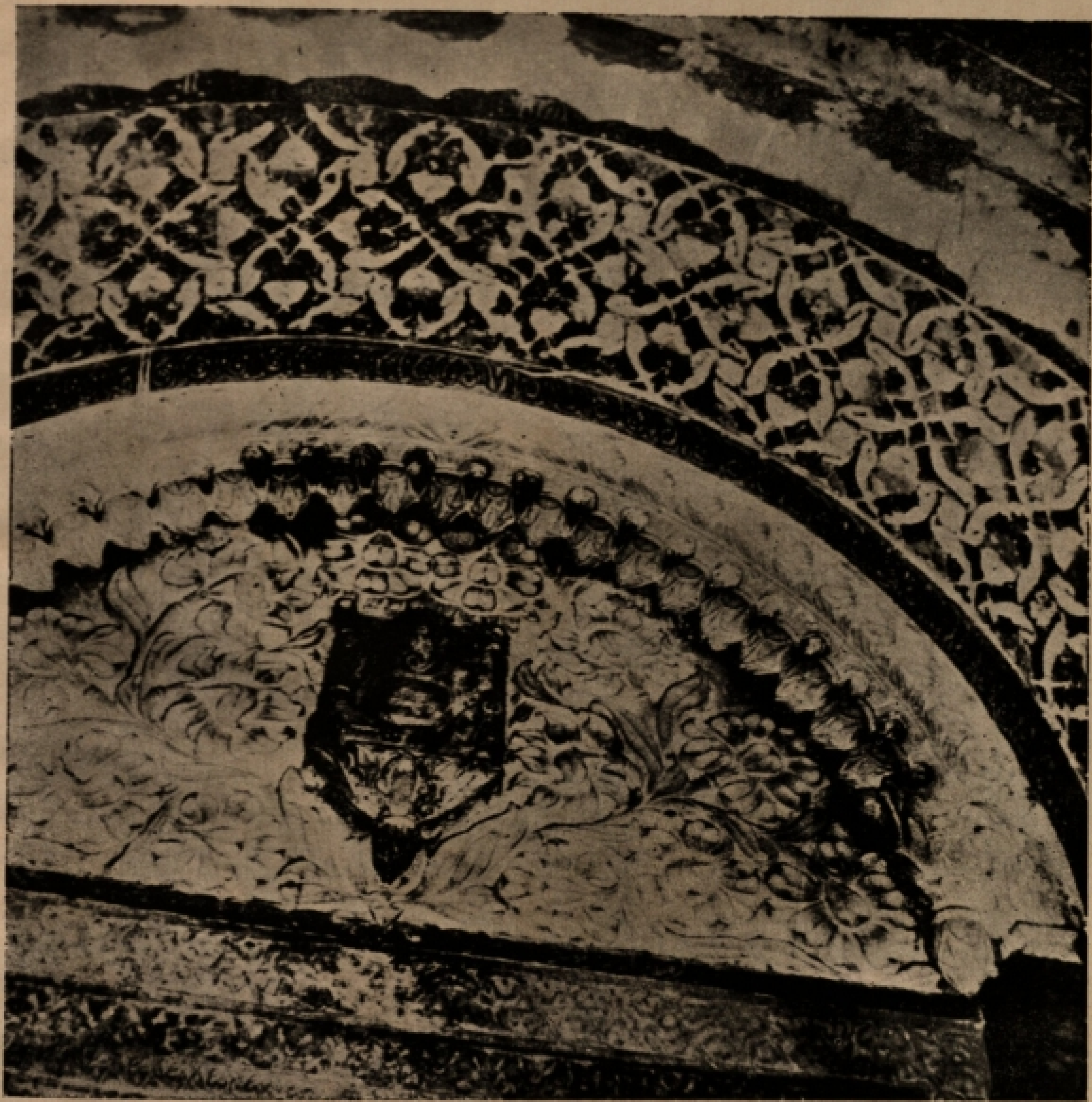


68. Krishnamandir, Mirzapur, Darbhanga.

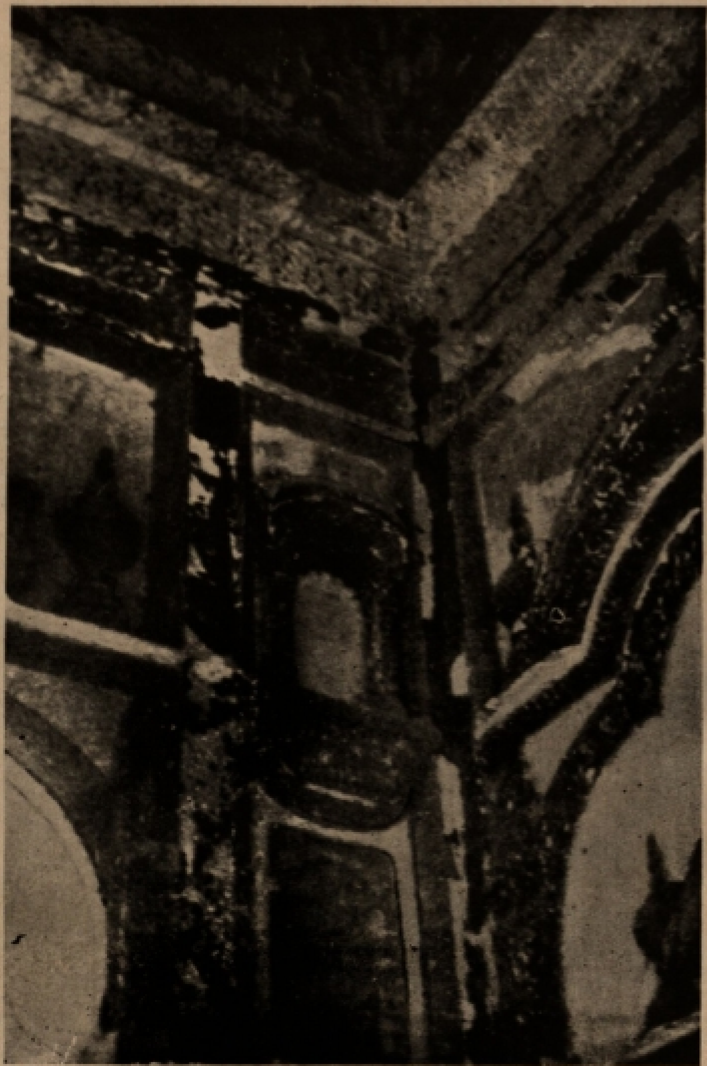
Plate XLVI



69. Temple of ekchari type, Bhit-Bhagwanpur.



70. Painting on the ceiling of the Ahilyasthana Mandir.



71. Paintings on the wall of the Ahilyasthana Mandir, Tamoriya.

INDEX